## GAMBIT

## A Gourse in <br> Chess Iaciles

## Dejan Bojkov and Vladimir Georgiev

A step-by-step approach to mastering tactics and combinations

A Course in Chess Tactics

Dejan Bojkov and Vladimir Georgiev

GAMBIT

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$+\quad$ check
++ double check
\# checkmate
!! brilliant move
$!\quad$ good move
!? interesting move
?! dubious move
? bad move
?? blunder
$+\quad \quad$ White is winning
$\pm \quad$ White is much better
$\pm \quad$ White is slightly better
$=\quad$ equal position
$\overline{\overline{+}}$
$\mp$
is slighly better
Black is much better
Black is winning
championship
1-0 the game ends in a win for White
$1 / 2-1 / 2 \quad$ the game ends in a draw
$0-1 \quad$ the game ends in a win for Black
(D) see next diagram

## Introduction

## Why are tactics so important?

Most of our readers will have asked themselves this question at some point. Tactics are the chess tools that everyone uses throughout every game. When we start our thinking process, the first thing that we do is calculation: "If I move here, he will answer there, then I will do this and he will answer that." We are also trying to discover new ideas, follow plans, and strategically outplay our opponents. But in every stage of the game, tactics are following us, supporting our ideas, or ruining the plans of our adversary.

The then young Alexander Beliavsky made the following comment after his exceptional tournament victory in Alicante 1978 where he scored 13 points from 13 games: "Chess is a very easy game; all you need to do is calculate lines, and everything will be OK." There is a good deal of truth in this apparently naïve statement, as our tactical ability is what enables us to survive the jungle of our beautiful game, and provides a guide in the sea of lines, and supports our reasoning and logic.

Chess is a complex game - while there are many general principles to assist us, there are also many exceptions to them: in one position one principle might work, but in a slightly different position, other factors might prevail, and only our ability to work out the tactical details will enable us to determine the right path in such cases. From a philosophical perspective, one may conclude that tactical calculations are the one true cornerstone of chess. Therefore it is no wonder that chess engines have become so strong. They can calculate millions of chess moves in a second, and they rarely make tactical errors.

## What causes tactics to occur?

Two factors are of great importance: energy and time.
An energetic imbalance often enables one of the players to carry out a profitable tactical operation. For instance, overloaded, pinned, and blocked pieces have less mobility, and thus less energy. Their contact with a fully mobile piece may prove lethal for them. On the other hand, more energetic pieces can easily deliver double and discovered attacks. They may be used to deflect and decoy more important and valuable pieces, or be used to disrupt the harmony within the opponent's army by such means as blocking, interference, etc.

Time is the other factor that will prove us right or wrong in a tactical operation. Chessboard opportunities are fleeting, and we must seize every chance before the opponent is able to secure his position. By striking at the moment when our pieces have more energy, we can either win material (transforming energy into matter) or achieve the highest aim by mating the enemy king. From here the main principle of tactics is seen: with each of our moves we must create a threat. Even 'silent' moves create some threat, even if it is maybe not always obvious.

## What does this book aim to do?

Our book is separated into two parts. The first one deals in turn with each of the tactical methods that are important in practical chess. We have presented ideas on how to search for each method; indeed, this was the initial intention of our work. However, a question arises: there are 14 essential tactical methods presented, and will not a large number of principles just confuse the reader? And how exactly will he know which question to ask, and which piece of advice to follow before taking
a crucial decision? In a game of chess there is a great deal to think about in addition to possible tactical ideas, and if we need to ask all these questions, our work will be too laborious.

This is not what the book is all about. Our aim is to help you develop an understanding of the principles of chess tactics, so that they become instinctive. With some practice, you will start to sense the crucial moments, to feel danger in your position and to smell when something is wrong in your opponent's camp. Inevitably a chess-player learns by trial and error, but it is possible to progress faster and with fewer failures by learning and applying chess principles. Moreover, tackling and solving carefully chosen exercises will help you subconsciously memorize typical patterns.

The first part of the book is written by Dejan Bojkov. I used a lot of personal examples of mine in this material. This is not to show you how good I am, and what an incredible tactician I am supposed to be (indeed, some of the examples are painful defeats), but because when discussing what went through a player's mind when making a particular decision, and which variations he foresaw, one can speak with far greater authority when the player concerned is oneself! Joel Lautier stated that we "first calculate during the game, and later cover our tactics with words." This emphasizes the importance of tactics in chess; strategic landmarks are primarily a guide for our tactical work.

The second part of the book is written by both authors. It features the three most common positions of a castled king and various attacking patterns against them, as well as three tactical themes that widely occur in practice. We have sought to discuss these strategic themes in the context of the tactical themes that are most relevant to them.

We hope that our work will help you feel more at home in various tactical situations, and that this will increase the pleasure that you derive from chess.

## 1 Pin

The pin is one of the most common tactical methods in chess．By using a line piece（a queen，a rook or a bishop）we can＇freeze＇an enemy piece if moving it would expose to at－ tack a more important piece that is behind it on the same line．If the pin is against the king，then we call this an＇absolute＇pin，as the pinned piece cannot move by the laws of chess．In other cases，it is not illegal for the pinned piece to move，but doing so may involve a loss（or sacrifice）of material．

The lack of mobility of a pinned piece can be exploited by attacking it with additional units， and this often results in material gains．In order to win material，it is not even necessary to have more attackers than there are defenders：we just need to be attacking it with a lower－value unit， and so pawns are ideal for the purpose．If we at－ tack the pinned piece with a piece of the same value，then we will just be exchanging it，as long as the pinned piece can be adequately de－ fended．

A pinned piece is limited in its actions，and is deprived of much of its potential．However，we must bear in mind that a pin is a temporary ad－ vantage that must be used promptly．Otherwise our opponent can escape or break the pin．The following example demonstrates a number of these points in the context of a high－level grand－ master struggle．

## Dreev－Seirawan

Wijk aan Zee 1995



White is better developed，and already has some tactical threats： $8 \ldots$ ．．．e e ？loses to 9 勾！


9 e 3 （D）
$9 . .$. Qc $^{6}$
Black is behind in development．While this move is not actually bad（and may in fact be Black＇s objectively best move），it is risky as it

gives White an interesting tactical opportunity to make use of a pin．9．．．臬e7？again fails to 10


 $140-0 \pm$ or the more incisive 12 嵝xb6！）I1 气e5

$9 . . .0$ bd7 is the safest choice，giving White only a slight edge．

## 10 b 5 ！

The＇Trojan Horse＇is untouchable due to the pin．

## 10．．．巴 e 8

 puts unbearable pressure on the pinned knight and Black has to part either with it，or with his bishop after ．．．${ }^{\text {de }} 5$ ，which leaves White com－ pletely winning．Note that White is able to at－ tack the pinned piece with further units with great speed．

## 11 菷a4 ©d7（D）

11 ．．．㟶d7 is another attempt to break the pin．

 preserves an advantage．

## 12 © 7 7＋

Dreev again wants to use a pin，this time against his opponent＇s queen on the c－file．
$120 \mathrm{~d} 6+$ is a reasonable alternative，though Black has the defensive resource $12 \ldots$ ．．． ex 613
包xf3＋15 gxf3 宸xc8 16 皃d2！．Black＇s king

should stay in the centre，while White pos－ sesses a strong bishop－pair．

## 12．．．

A tricky move，which intends to deprive Black of the option 13 定xc7 宸xc7 14 曾xa6
 tending ．．．b5 and Black is ready to break the

 somewhat better，but a discovered attack levels the chances： $20 \ldots$ ．．．$b 4+21 \mathrm{axb} 4$ 曷xb8 22 dxe 5当 c 823 拍 d 2 胃 $\mathrm{c} 4=$ ．

## 13．．．賣xa6？！

Black falls in line with White＇s plans，and ends up in a difficult situation． $13 \ldots .{ }^{0} \mathrm{db} 8!(D)$ ， providing additional support for the pinned knight，was possible here too．


In his notes Dreev points out the＇refutation＇

 0 xb 8 ，when Black wins．Obviously White would have to transpose by 14 鼻xc7 $4 \times 7$ to the note to White＇s 13th move，where Black levels the chances．

What has gone wrong？Why does White have no way to achieve an advantage？Actually，
it shouldn＇t come as a great surprise，as Black did not commit any terrible errors in the open－ ing，while White has been attacking before com－ pleting his development．However，Black＇s defence was by no means easy，and the chances for him to commit serious mistakes were much greater than for White．For instance，the natural $13 . . . \mathrm{e} 5$ is not a simple solution to his problems， as 14 寞xb7 cannot be met by 14 ．．．覴xb7？due to 15 凿xc6．Thus Black has to fish in troubled waters with $14 \ldots$ ．．．cb8！（or $14 \ldots.)^{5} 5$ ？ ） $150-0$ exf4．

## 

White now has a rook and a pawn for two pieces，but he controls the vital open c－file，and can still use the pin to hinder his opponent＇s de－ velopment．

## 16．．．矣e7 17 b4！f6

In case of $17 \ldots$ ．．．c4， 18 登xb6！（much better than Dreev＇s continuation 18 xxc4）18．．．㝑xb6 19 岩xd7＋皃f820 20 c6 wins for White．

## 18 b5 宪xb5 19 世膤xb5 fxe5 20 0－0！



## 20．．．exd4？！

20．．．氜f7 21 光fc1 亶d8？loses to 22 胃c7！，but in my opinion Black was obliged to castle at any rate：20．．．0－0 21 苞xe6．

## 21 盖fc1！官d8？！

Finally Seirawan collapses under the pres－ sure．Dreev gives one more instructive line：

営f5＋） 24 e4！dxe4？！（21．．．绱d7 looks like Black＇s last chance） 25 凿c4 6 （ $D$ ）．


Now a cunning use of the pin： 26 憎xd4 皃f7
 White wins．

22 exd4！

Dreev prefers to attack，rather than defend in



## 22．．．⿷匚⿱⿰㇒一母凵 23 a4！＋－

The pawn on b6 is pinned now．．．



There is no salvation anyway，since after
真f6 32 篹d6 the pawn will promote．

29 苞d6＋1－0

## Advantage in Development

A pin can be especially effective when our op－ ponent＇s king is still in the centre．For the sake of opening the position，pawns and even pieces are often sacrificed to set up pins along the cen－ tral files or the diagonals leading to an exposed king．

Bruzon－Flores
Morelia 2008
息c4e660－0 a6 7 a4 b6 8 关e1真b79 e5！

Black has played too passively in the open－ ing，and White starts to open lines against his king in the centre．

9．．．dxe5 10 d 5 exd5 11 气xd5 0 e 712 宴g5宽xd5
 no relief for Black．



## 15 盆xf6！

＂With so many pins and a development ad－ vantage，the tactical ideas are clearly justified，＂ states the Brazilian GM Vescovi． $150 x$ xe5 fxe5
is another way to keep the king in the centre．
 Black has three minor pieces for a queen，which usually favours the side with the pieces．How－ ever，here the black king cannot find a safe ha－ ven，and White is much better．The way that Bruzon chose is more clear－cut，and should lead to victory．
幽d5？

But here he goes astray．The correct 18 敝g4！

 should lead to a win（Vescovi）．In this line White exchanges one of his active rooks，but for Black＇s only active piece．Both knights are now partially paralysed due to the pin，and this causes pain and suffering among Black＇s other
官f8 20 息xd7＋－．It is quite obvious that Black has to part with his superfluous material．In such situations the attacker must seek to regain the material without loosening his grip or giv－ ing up the initiative．

## 18．．．量f7 19 党ae1 多f8

The white queen on d 5 is hanging，and so Black relieves his position by eliminating some of White＇s active pieces．

## 20 黄xd7 0 xc6 21 黄xc6

White is still better but Black managed to save half a point with stubborn defence．

One of the features of the pin is that break－ ing it is time－consuming．In the next example Svidler cleverly converts his advantage using this fact．


Svidier－Shirov
European Team Ch，Plovdiv 2003

## 






## 1－0

If Black wants to break the pin he needs to move the bishop from g 6 ，and then play ．．．g6 and ．．． B g7．Unfortunately，he lacks the time，since White already threatens ${ }^{[ } \mathrm{f}$ f 1 ．After $25 \ldots$ ．．． d d 3 he must choose his reply carefully：
a）Not 26 㫜c1？賭c5！！when，using the idea of double attack，Black wins the necessary tempo．
b） 26 念d5？is also a poor place for the bishop and gives Black additional time for regrouping： $26 \ldots \mathrm{c} 427$ e6 xe3（now the bishop is under attack and White cannot push the pawn） 28 \＆ f 3
嗞x $8 \mathrm{~g} 4+=$ with perpetual．
c） 26 賣b3！g5 27 e 6 （Black manages to save the pinned bishop，but White gains enough time to promote his pawn）27．．． O g 728 e 7 真g6
 escape from ${ }^{\mu} \mathrm{xh} 8$ and盖ff8．

Sometimes even world champions may miss a useful pin．The following diagram provides an example．

Kramnik chose $\mathbf{1 5}$ d3？！and won after a long and hard battle．Instead，everything was ready for a tactical blow based on a pin．Just have a look at all his active pieces－the bishop， rook，and knight on e5，and the second knight ready to join the fray immediately．Correct was
 knight，and deflecting the bishop from its ac－ tive position．White cannot make use of the pin


Kramnik－Krasenkow
Wijk aan Zee 2003
 with ．．．$仓$ bd5 to follow－Black is putting obsta－ cles in the way of the pin，which is a typical de－ fensive method）．After $16 \ldots$ ．．．xe7 17 亿e5＋－ White has won an important pawn，and kept all the advantages of his position．

Both players overlooked this option．Why？ ＂This most probably happened because White was clearly better after proceeding calmly＂ states Evseev，but I suspect the reason is differ－ ent－Kramnik saw the idea ．．．鼻xf2＋and aban－ doned his calculations．

Sometimes our opponent is protecting his pinned piece with all the forces at his disposal， and we lack an additional attacker．But there are still ways of making use of the pin，such as re－ moving the defending forces：


Flores－Valerga
Fischer Memorial，Villa Martelli 2008
The d5－knight is pinned but it is well pro－ tected by both a pawn and a rook．We do not
have a way to attack it with another piece．But maybe we can break the mechanism of the de－ fence somehow？

39 Exc6！
Physically removing one of the defenders and decoying the second one into a double at－ tack．

39．．．． e d 7
If $39 \ldots$ ．．．exc6，then after the fork 40 息xd5＋ followed by 41 鼻xc6 White emerges a knight ahead．

## 40 皆5 1－0

The job is done；there are no longer enough defenders！

When the pin is against any piece other than the king，we must be on the lookout for pin－ breaking sacrifices．No doubt you remember Legall＇s Mate from your early chess education． However，there are many other examples where a pin against a queen proves insufficient to im－ mobilize a piece．


Bosboom－Janssen
Dutch Ch，Hilversum 2007

## 

White was obviously counting on this pin to save his rook．However，there is a simple and strong reply：

25．．．Exd6！0－1
Black sacrifices his queen，but wins it back
 and the white queen is pinned．

Sometimes the ultimate use of a pin is not the destruction of the pinned piece itself，but an－ other target，which the opponent cannot protect due to the pin．


## A．Sokolov－Nevednichy Yugoslav Team Ch，Igalo 1994

Black＇s knight on c6 is desperately pinned， but how can White strengthen his attack？There are no other pieces that can be brought to bear on the knight．However，if we take a closer look at the position we discover that Black has two weak pawns－those on b6 and e6．This is ex－ actly what Sokolov uses in addition to the pin：

After this White wins the b6－pawn，but if 22．．． xa 7 then 23 是xd7 wins the pawn on e6．

23 宸xb6 鼻f8（D）


## 24 c 4

An energetic way of exploiting the pin．White is not only a pawn up，but he keeps the knight pinned，and shall finally win it．

24．．． 55
$24 \ldots \mathrm{dxc} 425$ 息xc4 and the pin is towards the king．
畀xe6！1－0

The final touch．Black resigned in view of
数 b 7 ．

A skilful opponent will generally be well aware of the dangers that a pin may cause． However，we may nevertheless be able to direct the game along the course we desire by forcing a pin：


Peredy－Malanca
Budapest 2003
Black first activates his rook：
30．．．甼d1＋！ 31 点h2（D）
And now forces his opponent＇s king to step on a minefield：


## 31．．．${ }^{2} h 1+$ ！ 32 舁xh1 細xh3＋0－1

For the hyper－important tempo Black sacri－ ficed a whole rook，and was rewarded with mate．

## Defence Against Pins

So far we have only seen how dangerous the pin can be．But what should we do when we are faced with a pin on one of our own pieces？First of all，do not panic；there are many possible ways to neutralize the threats generated by a pin：
－Exchange off or move the piece against which the pin is made．
－Deflect the pinning piece．
－Support the pinned piece along the line of the pin：a pawn can be useful for this purpose．


Black plays ．．．d5 and puts an obstacle in the way of the pin．
－Interpose along the line of the pin so as to at－ tack the pinning piece（with a bishop vs a bishop，for example）．
－Provide additional support for the pinned piece－less valuable pieces support first．
－Remove the enemy forces that could add to the attack against the pinned piece．


J．Polgar－Aronian
Wijk aan Zee 2008

It looks like Black will lose his knight be－ cause of the pin against his king．However，this knight still has some energy left in it，and at－ tacks the important f4－pawn．By using a decoy， Black wins an important tempo and neutralizes the threats with minimal material losses．

## 23．．．全 $\mathbf{f 3}+$ ！

Only move．Otherwise，after 23．．．\＄f7 24

a solid pawn up，and has every chance to win the endgame．

## 24 舁xf3

Forced．Now the d5－knight and the f8－rook will combine their efforts．

## 24．．．昜xf4＋

Everyone knows that＇a pinned piece does not defend＇，but here we see an exception：while the d 5 －knight is not allowed to move by the laws of chess，by that same set of rules it never－ theless defends the f4－rook against capture by the white king．

## 

The position is about equal，and later ended in a draw．This saving idea had already been seen in the game Nakamura－Aronian，Gibraltar 2005.

## The Pin as a Defensive Method



Aggelis－Bojkov
Veria 2008
＂My position is clearly better，＂I thought when it arose，＂and I only need to find the most precise plan．＂Unfortunately this was far away from the truth．After some twenty minutes of deliberation I went for what seemed to be my best practical chance：

33．．． 9 g 3
This naïve－looking move creates an unpleas－ ant threat of a fork，which my opponent missed．

## 34 豈e3？

Since 34 虫fl？？is not possible because of 34．．．㘳hl\＃， 34 真e 4 was White＇s only move． Then：
a）The problem with $34 . . .{ }^{\omega} \times f 4$ is that White recovers his pawn by force： 35 黄xf4 $2+36$
皃g $4=$
b） $34 \ldots$ 崰 h 3 （threatening the bishop） 35 宸f3！ （White must keep the knight pinned against the queen to gain enough time for defence） 35 ．．． 36 复 $\mathrm{d} 3=$ and the worst is behind White．
c） $34 \ldots \mathrm{~g} 5$ ！？is objectively best： 35 fxg 5 挡xe4 $36{ }^{W} \mathrm{xg} 3$ 宸xc2 with a slight edge for Black in the endgame．

## 34．．．岩xf4 35 宸e7 㟶f7

Black won an important pawn and soon the game．

A counterpin is also a useful defensive method．But never forget that a pinned piece can still exert a lot of influence，despite its lack of mobility：


Black＇s rook is pinned and he decided to free it by means of a counterpin：

1．．．宣 5 ？
Unfortunately for him，the bishop remains active enough to support two raging rooks．But first White needs to gain a decisive tempo：

3．．．迫h64営1g6\＃．



While this book was being written，the chess world witnessed a remarkable demonstration that everyone can go astray，even the great cham－ pions（see following diagram）．

29 分xd4？
For such a high－level game，this is a terrible blunder，which effectively sealed Kramnik＇s fate


Kramnik - Anand
World Ch match (game 5), Bonn 2008
in the match, and reconfirmed Anand as the world champion. Kramnik obviously saw that his back rank was weak, and also perceived that his bishop could interpose:




But as he confessed at the press-conference after the game, he overlooked a cunning tactic that achieves one of the ideas we have already described: "put more pressure on the pinned piece".
34... 0 e3!! 35 fxe3 fxe3 0-1

Since "escaping from a pin is time-consuming", White cannot avoid the deadly ...e2.

## Exercises



Black's pieces appear stuck, but he found a way to make use of a pin.


Show how White can exploit a pin.


Can Black win a pawn?


How can White conclude his attack?


Force Black into a pin!


Is Black lost?


Must White retreat?


Create and exploit a pin by using the tactical features of the position.

## 2 Deflection

In the course of the game we try to deploy our pieces as actively as we can．We try to dominate our opponent＇s pieces．Some of them are needed for protection of important squares and lines， and the same goes for our opponent．

A piece can perform various functions，and it can defend another piece，or pieces，or impor－ tant defensive points，especially around the king．If the square that particular piece is pro－ tecting is vital for our opponent，it may be worth our while to sacrifice material to deflect the piece．

We can use deflection in two general ways： either to profit immediately from it（gain of ma－ terial or creation of a deadly mating－net）or as an instrument to gain time and，e．g．，achieve a decisive attack．

Larino－Bojkov<br>Ferrol 2008

1 d 4 气f6 2 c 4 g 63 气c3 客g74e4d65 气f3
隠e8 $10 \mathrm{c} 5(D)$


Larino chooses a sharp line with pawn sacri－ fices that was developed by Ivan Cheparinov．I had analysed this line beforehand，and funnily enough it coincided with Larino＇s preparation for Black，as we discovered in the post－mortem．






I was very happy with my position．The opening complications seem to have come to an end，and for the sacrificed exchange Black has the bishop－pair，a dangerous passed pawn and strong pressure．I considered White＇s only move to be 21 嶫xd3，giving back the exchange，and I was quite pleased with the position arising after
 reasonable counterplay． 21 曼xg2？was one of the possible lines I was dreaming of，when all my pieces participate in a decisive assault：
 an easy point for me．While I was still day－ dreaming，my young opponent played a totally unexpected move：

21 答 e 2 ！
This is a deep idea based on deflection for both defensive and counterattack purposes． White is again exchanging the dark－squared bishop and returning the exchange，but in this line he also activates his queen to the maximum on the long diagonal，and creates threats against Black＇s king．Meanwhile，my knight on g4 be－ comes misplaced and vulnerable．The only drawback of the idea is that Black obtains a passed pawn on e2，the power of which I failed to appreciate．After spending more than half an hour，I could not find anything better than fol－ lowing a forcing line：

## 21．．．dxe2 22 榁xd4 䰟b7

My engine first claimed that after 22．．．f6 Black has survival chances，but this is hardly the objective truth．White has many options； for instance， 23 总el（only not 23 ect？？，when suddenly Black＇s passed pawn starts kicking：
 other idea though）23．．．De5 24 xe5 fxe5 25


23 h3
This move forces the exchange of all my ac－ tive pieces，or at least，so I thought．

23．．．．${ }^{\text {苞xd5？}}$
While preparing the game as an example for this book，I suddenly discovered that my posi－ tion was not yet lost and I had a wonderful com－ bination at my disposal：23．．．f5！！（D）．

 Qxc7 登xf 27 譜c4＋with a double attack and ended our calculations here．This was a shame －I could have probably saved half a point thanks to the energy left in my pieces，and us－ ing the ideas of clearance and deflection．After $27 . .$. dig 728 Wexe2 e3！（deflecting his pawn and entirely clearing the long diagonal for my bishop） 29 fxe 3 £fl + Black＇s pieces manage to coordinate their efforts，and the resulting end－ game is drawn；for example， 30 訔xfl gxfl訔＋

 tive） 33 e4 䉣d6 34 包 5 鼻xd5 35 exd5 当xd5 $=$ 。



White has won a pawn，and soon the game．



The rest of the game is not important to our theme，so I shall not examine it in detail．The

young Spaniard comfortably converted his ad－ vantage into victory．






 1－0

How does deflection work？


Fleuren－Murray
Bunratty 2008
Black＇s queen is obliged to defend the g7－ square．If we can somehow deflect it，we can deliver mate．

## 21 害b4！嚅7

If $21 \ldots c 5$ ，we can simply grab the pawn，and the same problems remain for Black．

22 血xf8喼xf8
White has already won an exchange，but the queen still needs to guard the $g 7$ point，which makes a further blow possible．

23 胥d8！1－0

## How to spot which piece to deflect



Krasenkow－Bacrot
Wijk aan Zee 2008
If White＇s rook were not defending the vital f2－pawn，it would be mate in one with ．．．©xf2\＃． That is why Bacrot deflects the rook．

## 31．．．${ }^{\text {anbl }}$ ！ 32 h3

As we know，the rook is poisoned（ 32 等 xbl xfe\＃），but now the same rook is pinned by its counterpart and Black can grab a pawn：

Two extra pawns are more than enough for an easy win．


Papin－Ovechkin
Voronezh 2008
Let us analyse the situation from Black＇s point of view．

Material is approximately equal，or else a lit－ tle worse for us－we have an exchange for a couple of pawns．Our king looks safer than the opponent＇s．Obviously our chances are in the middlegame，in the form of an attack against
the white king，which is stuck in the centre．We have two excellent attacking pieces：the queen and the knight．However，the black rook is not showing its full potential，and right now our knight is under attack．

If we now take a look at the opponent＇s camp，which piece is his best defender？That＇s right：the knight．It protects vital squares around the king，including c1，and shields important squares on the second rank．

Is there a move that can achieve two goals at the same time：activate Black＇s last piece，and get rid of White＇s best defender？Yes，there is：

36．．．f3！
This move deflects the pawn and frees an im－ portant square．

## $0-1$

White resigned in view of $37 \mathrm{gxf} 3 \mathrm{~g} \mathrm{gl}+$ ！！ （now deflecting the knight） $380 \times \mathrm{xgl} \mathrm{w}_{\mathrm{cc}} \mathrm{Cl}+39$ 둡 e 2 包 4 \＃

Successful deflection is usually based on an overload（more on this theme in the next chap－ ter）：one of our opponent＇s pieces has too many duties to take care of．If we spot such a piece， we can bravely attack it－it usually has no－ where to go．It is even better if we can target that piece while also attacking another one，as in the following example：


Kr．Georgiev－Saada
Saint Affrique 2007

The e7－knight has to guard the vital c8－ square，and Georgiev finds a way to deflect it：

## 53 ©g8！1－0

This is also a double attack．Black needs to
䔍c7＋wins a queen，and later a double attack
will deal with Black＇s knights－as an exercise， find it yourself！

Here it is more complicated：


Fedorchuk－Buhmann
World Under－18 Ch，Oropesa del Mar 1999

Black＇s king is in a precarious situation，but White needs to hurry to exploit this circum－ stance．Both the eighth rank and the d 7 －square seem well protected but White mates with the help of two deflections：

## 26 Wef4！1－0

This is not just an exchange，but a deflection．
 is the second deflection： 27 ．．．茴xe8 28 d 7 \＃．

Before the decisive break，we may need to identify and deal with the main defenders in order to improve our chances for success．


Muse－Mirumian
Berlin 1999
When we build our attack，we try to create a superiority of forces in the part of the board
where the main battle will take place．Deflecting the opponent＇s forces can tip the balance in our favour before the direct assault．It is especially useful to divert the enemy queen，since this is the most powerful defender．

## 22．．．． exa 4 ！

In order to weaken White＇s castled position， Black sacrifices an exchange to deflect the queen，and to gain precious time．The immedi－ ate implementation of his tactical idea by
 24 数xg2 fxe4 25 雪gl（the queen is protecting the vital f2 point） $25 \ldots$ ．．．h3 26 是d5 +- and the bishop is participating in the defence．

23 炭xa4 © xg 2 ！！
Shattering the white king＇s defences．
24 皃 xg 2 fxe4（ $D$ ）


Black now opens all the files and diagonals for his remaining pieces．White＇s queen is too far away at the moment when it is most desper－ ately needed，and Black wins in all lines．

25 笪 2
Or：

b） 25 嶙c2（the queen will be one tempo too

酋x1\＃．



 wins．

Black invested an exchange in order to de－ flect the white queen and as a result won two tempi，which was enough to give his attack a decisive impetus．

In the examples that we have examined so far，deflections of key defenders were made in the name of checkmate．Sometimes though we deflect pieces with more prosaic ideas，such as material gain：


Hebden－E．Moser<br>European Union Ch，Liverpool 2008

The pawn on h6 is pinned，and if we imagine for a second that the bishop on e7 does not exist then there will be a decisive fork by $0 g 5+$ ．This thought leads us quickly and logically to find the decisive idea：

## 18 䜿d6！鼻xd6

The capture of the rook is forced，since after
 ting mated．
$190 \mathrm{~g} 5+1$－ 0
Black also loses the bishop，so she decided to call it a day．

## Deflection in Defence



McNab －Berelovich
Jessie Gilbert Memorial，Coulsdon 2008

White has advanced his a－pawn too quickly， and now it looks as if he might have to resign due to the threat of 80 ．．．当g2\＃．However，a de－ flection saves the day：

80 宸 $\mathrm{e} 3+$ ！
This deflects the black queen away from threatening mate，and gains a vital tempo．

## 80．．．曹xe381 a8宸

White＇s sacrifice turns out to be of just a pawn after all！Now he threatens mate on h8， and this gives him the time he needs to parry Black＇s mating ideas．

We should now look at a more sophisticated case of deflection．


Sulashvili－G．Guseinov
Baku 2008

The following move is one the most pro－ found deflections I have ever seen：

## 28．．．菷h5！！

An unbelievable winning move．The point？ The answer comes from a logical analysis of the position．White＇s position is quite shaky， but straightforward methods do not give Black anything：28．．．量g6？ 29 雨e2！or 28．．．形h1＋？ 29拍e2 峟xg2＋30 数d3．To succeed，he needs to deflect both of White＇s active pieces from the central squares－thus freeing either the c－file for his rook or the a6－f1 diagonal for his bishop．

29 貝xe6＋
In case of 29 摆xc6 克c4＋！the diagonal is
 $30 . .$. 㫣c4＋！）．
 the game．

29．．．党hxe6！（ $D$ ）


## 30 宸xe6＋

Desperation，but in the line 300 xe6 㟧h $1+$ 31 皃e2 ${ }^{\omega} \mathrm{Wg} 2+32$ 觡d 3 comes the key point behind Black＇s 28th move：32．．．씰c2\＃．Black also wins quickly in the line 30 wc2 e2＋31
 etc．



A double attack．Black recovers the material with interest and continues attacking．


## Exercises



A simple exercise just to check you are con－ centrating．．．


Black needs to find a nice touch．


White uses two deflections to give mate．


White＇s b2－square and back rank are both weak．Take advantage of this！


White is on top due to the line $22 . .0 \times 23$ © xc 7 罖b7 24 b 5 . True or false?


How can White start a decisive attack?


If only Black could chase the knight away


To the right, to the left...

## 3 Overload

An overload occurs when a piece has more than one duty，and when it is forced to carry out one of these tasks，this leaves it unable to perform its other functions．For example，a piece might be protecting two or more pieces simultaneously，or might be guarding a num－ ber of critical squares．

The removal or annihilation of an overloaded piece may bring about a total collapse of the de－ fence：


Fahnenschmidt－Ma．Tseitlin
European Seniors Ch，Bad Homburg 2005
Black would like to give a standard mate with his rooks on White＇s second rank．For the moment the only piece that prevents this is White＇s light－squared bishop．Therefore Black can consider any means to remove this piece， even a sacrifice of his most valuable piece：

27．．．紫g4＋！0－1



Indeed，an overloaded piece only offers a weak or fake defence to the objects it is appar－ ently covering（see following diagram）．

The black queen is protecting the rook on cl ． However，this protection is only partial and in－ sufficient since the queen will need to retreat if a major danger arises：


Humpy Koneru－Murali Krishnan
Mumbai 2008

27 包b6＋！湈xb6
The priority is to safeguard the king，so Black cannot afford $27 . .$. axb6 allowing instant mate by 28 邑 44 \＃

An overloaded piece is also limited in its mobility due to its onerous duties：


Lechtynsky－Tupy
Pribram（rapid） 1996

The c8－rook needs to protect the black queen． This means that White can easily threaten it even on the back rank，which such a rook would usually cover very naturally：

25 笪e8＋！1－0

We can also exploit an overloaded piece to gain time to improve our own pieces．


Gil Alba－Fernandez Cardoso Santa Clara 2003

The black queen is tied to the defence of its knight，and White exploits this fact to prepare a deadly discovered attack：

1 O 3 ！峟xe5 2 Of3 崖h5
鸴acl＋－，while $2 \ldots$ 曾e 7 walks into a discovered attack： $30 \mathrm{~d} 5+-$ ．

Thus White has chased the queen to a bad square，while simultaneously improving his own pieces．

3 © 5 ！！（ $D$ ）


3．．．定xh 3


 $9 x c 76$ 宸 $7+-$ ）is the most resilient．

An important skill is being able to spot which piece is overloaded．


Rowson－Brunello
Palau 2008

Black is holding the position due to his queen －it protects both the rook and the knight．This provides the setting for an overload，which can be exploited here by removing the queen by ex－ changing it off：




G．Guseinov－Natarajan
Dubai 2008

In many cases it is not obvious which piece can become overloaded．In this example White is attacking the a6－pawn twice，and Black is de－ fending it twice．However，if White captures with the bishop，he opens a line for his rook， and a hidden threat of mate on d 8 ．This means that Black also needs his rook on his back rank －thus it is overloaded，and its defence of a6 turns out to be illusory：

Black cannot even limit the damage to one pawn，since White now uses a double pin to

emphasize another overload－this time of the c6－bishop．

## 19 菷e4！1－0

Another way to view this example is that Black delayed castling too long and White was able to deflect the sole defender of the back rank to deliver mate．

One thing is certain：an overload is usually exploited by a deflection．


Adly－Ramesh
Dubai 2008

The black queen and the e6－bishop need to guard the d 5 －knight．One of these pieces can be deflected：

## 18 ©xf7！1－0

After 18．．．宽xf719寞xb8 the queen needs to abandon the knight：19．．． $4 \times 6820$ 寞xd5＋－

Sometimes a whole position turns out to be loose because first one piece and then another is overloaded．

In the following position，the e7－bishop is overloaded since it needs to protect both the d6－pawn and the important f6－square：


Miroshnichenko－Turzo
Budapest 1999

## 19 巴xd6！㒻xd6

19．．．罥xh5 is met by 20 d $5+$－with the idea宸xe5．

## 20 亿f6＋真g7

20．．．怱h8 21 炭h4＋－
Now the key piece becomes the e5－knight， which has too many duties：it is the protector of the g4－bishop，but also has the higher duty of guarding its king．

21 Gcd5！举b8（D）
Black provides extra support for his knight， since his position will collapse after 21 ．．．cxd5


 صf6 h5 31 楁h 2 followed by g3\＃） $240 \times \mathrm{g} 4+\mathrm{f} 6$ $25 \varepsilon \times f 6+$－with the point $25 \ldots$ 啭b $260 \mathrm{e} 8+$眥xe5 27 苞xf8\＃


However，it is now the bishop that becomes overburdened．
$22 \mathrm{c} 5!$
Black＇s defences disintegrate under White＇s pressure．

However，we cannot expect a skilled oppo－ nent simply to leave his pieces overstretched in their defensive tasks．Thus we need to consider how we can create overloaded pieces．


Shavtvaladze－Avrukh
European Clubs Cup，Kallithea 2008

The most usual way is by decoying pieces to vulnerable squares．

31 e6
Black now saw a pin and became overambi－ tious，missing White＇s cunning reply：

31．．普e7？ 32 f5！
This decoys the rook to a vulnerable square．
32．．．盖 $\mathbf{x f 5}$（D）


Now the g6－pawn needs to protect both a rook and a knight，which is beyond its abilities． White therefore won material：

35．．．䇾xe2 loses after 36 管xe2 皆xe2 37 界 c 3


36 宏 dh 1 Еaf8（ $D$ ）
White now found one more overloaded piece －the f8－rook which must defend its colleague on f 2 ：


37 d8凿！1－0
Avrukh resigned due to the line $37 \ldots$ ．．．．．8xd8 38


## Exercises



This is a warm－up exercise．


Another warm－up．


There is no breathing space for White's king, but a soldier still guards him.


Create an overloaded piece in Black's camp.

White can win most neatly by exploiting an overloaded piece in Black's camp.


If one of White's pieces were not there it would be mate...


Black is worse, but what is his best practical try?

## 4 Decoy

Decoy is a tactical method in which we try to force a piece to go onto a particular unfavour－ able square．We can also call this square mined． Once the piece is on this square，we can either win the decoyed piece immediately，or employ some other tactical method（pin，double attack， discovered attack，etc．，or even mate）that is possible due to the piece＇s unfortunate presence on this square．

Decoy can also take the form of dragging out our opponent＇s king in front of his pawn－chain． Without his safe shelter，the king becomes an easy target for the attacking pieces．

When speaking about the dragging out of a king，Garry Kasparov＇s ingenious victory over Veselin Topalov naturally springs to mind．Al－ though every chess lover will no doubt have marvelled at this masterpiece already，I would like to go over Kasparov＇s combination and some of the main variations，with a particular emphasis on the leading role played by decoy：


Kasparov－Topalov Wijk aan Zee 1999

## 24 菌xd4！！cxd4？

As is now well－known，Topalov should have played $24 \ldots$ ．．．

## 25 発 $\mathrm{e} 7+$ ！客b6

The king is forced to go for a long and dan－ gerous walk，since after $25 \ldots$ ．．皃b8 26 莦xd4！ White has enough resources to execute Black＇s
king in his own camp；for example，26．．． 0 d 7


真xc6 33 0xc6＋－．

## 26 宸xd4＋家xa5

 parov intended to sacrifice his bishop by 28 \＄e6！！in order to gain a couple of tempi，and to keep Black＇s pieces locked up：28．．．鼻xd5（or



## 27 b4＋官a4

Black＇s king has been dragged out from his pawn－shield．Now the play becomes highly con－ crete because any check by White is likely to be mate．But in order to give the cherished check， White needs to deal with Black＇s many defend－ ers with great precision．Various deflection and decoy ideas will support his mission．

## 28 業c3

Later it was discovered that it is even better to start with 28 异a7！，which prepares a capture on a6 in order to deflect various defensive forces：

 evitable，whereafter the modest c－pawn has the pleasure of delivering mate．
宸c7！＋and Black＇s bishop blocks his queen＇s access to d 4 ．
c） $28 \ldots$ 盆 b 7 （the best defence is counter－ deflection） 29 包xb7 and now：
c1） $29 \ldots 0 \mathrm{xd} 530$ 宴d7！（the threat is 31宽xb5＋，and the white bishop decoys the black
 Oxb4（the only defence） 32 熒xd7（now the idea of 30 今d7 is revealed－the queen on d6 is overloaded！）32．．．当c5 33 甾d4 菢c8 34 龉b3＋ and White wins the queen．
 a5 32 定fl 泡hb8 33 発d6 wins for White） 31


蒌 $2+$（otherwise mate from a3，with or without a preliminary check on c3） 35 宵xa2 傢xb4 +36
 + ．

Kasparov＇s combination is especially beau－ tiful for the juggling with his last three remain－ ing pieces that manage always to be one move ahead of the powerful black army．The exuber－ ance of defensive options for Black is another vintage point of his exceptional combination．

## 28．．．霊xd5

28．．．鼻xd5 29 揢b2 is simple，with mate from b3 with the pawn as above．

29 送 7 ！
 check．

29．．．鼻b7！ 30 芭xb7（D）


30．．．wc4
 the white king a chance to make the desired step to b2．

However，in defence the principle of maxi－ mum involvement of the pieces is also valid， and Black had to try 30 ．．． ehe 8 ！，which should nevertheless lose，but gives White the most
 flashy 32 崽e6？昌xe6 33 荮xe6，with the idea 34 gib2，is refuted by the no less spectacular
 Exf7 ${ }^{\text {Me }} 8$ and Black＇s advantage in the end－ game is overwhelming；in this line the king turns from prey to a hunter）and now：
a）In the event of 32 ．．．emed8 Kasparov points out a calm way to build the familiar mating－net：

 change of the queens White liquidates to a win－ ning endgame．
b） $32 \ldots$ ．．． 0 d7 33 甾d6！（taking both vital squares from the queen） $33 \ldots$ ．．．ec8 34 Wb2 and White wins．
c） $32 \ldots$ ．．．e6 also fails to save Black： 33 登xe6 fxe6 34 卽b2 + －



Suddenly the white rook is trapped，but 34
 ble attack for the sake of deflection： 35 断 c3
 incredible ambush．Even from the first rank the queen can be fearsome． 35 ．．．霜xa3 is met with


30．．．2e4！ 31 fxe4 彊c4（ $D$ ）is another spec－ tacular saving attempt．



 managed to liquidate to an endgame，but his king is still in danger．As before，any check is fatal for him，and the white bishop now enters


 + followed by 41 c 4 and either 42 exa6＋！！
and 酉xb5\＃，or（in case of ．．．』db8 to hamper this plan）（g4－dI\＃．Magnificent geometry！

31 霥xf6 的xa3


 Wewd4 exd4 Black again survives to an end－ game，but after 35 曾xf7 a5 White has a slight advantage in material and a large positional plus，which he will convert into victory after 36 昷e6 axb4 37 余b3＋


32 娄 $\mathrm{xa6}+$ 家xb4 $33 \mathrm{c} 3+$ ！
This additional decoy idea－which is essen－ tial for this line to work－was foreseen well in advance by Kasparov．

貔 $27++$ ．

Decoying the queen to a poor square．
36．．．थd2
 one of the points behind 36 息fl．

 44 蔧27 1－0

Glorious，is it not？Without any doubt this is one of the most beautiful chess combinations ever．

The next game was also praised highly by its winner，who claimed that it was his best to date：

## Krasenkow－Nakamura

Barcelona 2007
 $0-06$ b3 a5 7 ch c6 8 d4 0 bd7 9 曾c2 b6 10
e4 宣a6 11 分d2？！c5！ 12 exd5 cxd4 13 Qb5

登xc6！ 21 宣xf6（ $D$ ）


In this crazy position where three of Black＇s pieces are hanging，Nakamura finds a way to create a forceful attack：

21．．．崖xf2＋！！
Dragging the white king in front of the pawn－chain．Black will have enough material to mate even without his queen．Krasenkow later admitted that he saw this possibility im－ mediately after he took on f 6 ，but it was already too late by then．



## 23 我 3

After 23 （t）fl the winning move is $23 \ldots \mathrm{c} 3+$ ！
 Remember the principle of involving as many pieces in the attack as you can．After 24 光e 2 c 2 ！ （deflection！） 25 Wxc2 余xe2＋ 26 gel 念d3＋ Black wins back the queen，as well as at least a whole rook as compensation．
 leads to a similar position as in the game，with
the sole difference that the bishop is on d 4 in－ stead on c5，which is not important．



For the queen，Black has only a bishop and two pawns，but his attack is unstoppable．The most important thing when dragging a king in front of his pawn－chain is to make sure that it cannot be securely protected by any of its pieces．

## 24．．． 2 e5＋！

This important move had to be foreseen in advance．The attack must be conducted with tempo（preferably with checks，as they are so forcing）．This move also opens an important di－ agonal for the light－squared bishop－the last piece to join the hunt．

## 25 亩g5

It is more resilient to eliminate the black knight by 25 最e5，but it does not help either： 25．．．ec8＋！ 26 易f5（you should always con－ sider moves like this when sacrificing huge
 28 宫g5 賭c8（29．．．息e3\＃is a threat）and then：


b） 29 嶒e1 allows a forced mate，but you do not need to calculate this line in advance，since the simple swap of the rook for the queen is enough to secure a winning endgame．For those interested，here is the mating line： 29 ．．．．㫜e3 30




c） $290 \times \mathrm{xc} 4(\mathrm{D})$ controls both e3 and e5．
However，Black wins by 29 ．．． $\mathrm{Eg} 6+30$ d
 from the important diagonal） 32 ve5 鼻e3＋



## $25 . .$. gg $6+26$ 愘 55 f 6

．．${ }^{\text {m }}$ 6\＃is coming．Note that White does not have a piece that can cover the h6－square，de－ spite his material advantage． $26 \ldots$ ．．\＆c8 would also work．

## 

It is mate in six more moves： 29 \＆$d 5+$ Exd5

啲h6 余 f 8 \＃

When sacrificing a lot of material for a mat－ ing attack，precise calculation is essential．If something goes wrong and our opponent es－ capes，we might be left in a lost position．But do not worry；the calculations are usually simple enough due to the forcing nature of the lines．


Speelman－Peng Xiaomin Erevan Olympiad 1996

White has some threats，but precise calcula－ tions show that a forced mate can be delivered thanks to a sequence of decoys：

## 




This was a fairly long line，but a forced one，so I am pretty sure that most of my readers could have worked it out for themselves．

Or 47．．．f6\＃．

The next example illustrates a noteworthy decoying pattern which can be added to your armoury：


Yuldachev－Belkin
Uzbekistan Ch，Tashkent 1993

150 xg 7 ！1－0
 18 宽f3\＃．

Decoys are based on the potential power of our pieces．If we do not find a direct way to make use of our pieces＇latent possibilities， then we can seek to create the right precondi－ tions by disrupting our opponent＇s defensive mechanisms．


Kuporosov－Yudasin
Kostroma 1985

Almost all White＇s pieces are optimally placed，but for the moment they attack only light squares．The pawn on c6 is the last shield of Black＇s king．It needs to be advanced or re－ moved．White needs only one move to unleash the energy of his pieces：

28 對b8＋！！1－0
Decoying the king onto a fatal square，and releasing the power of the pieces．There would follow 28．．．室xb8 $29 \mathrm{c} 7 \#$ ．

Decoy can be used to place an enemy piece on a square where we can destroy it－a mined square：


Hendriks－D．Boros Budapest 2008

We can use a knight fork to win material af－ ter decoying the king onto a mined square．

## 52．．．${ }^{\text {mh }} \mathbf{2 + !}$ 0－1

A decoy can be used to make material gains． We decoy an enemy piece，and trap it：


H．Nguyen－Porat<br>Budapest 2008

## 26．．．Exe5！0－1

The queen is dragged to a place from which there is no return： 27 嵝xe5 䕗f6．

## Decoy as a Defensive Method

We may also decoy a piece in order to gain an important tempo for our defence：


Klimov－Ovechkin
Novokuznetsk 2008
The position is equal if Black simply recap－ tures on c 6 ．Instead he thought he had found a beautiful combination：
 23 f 3 Eg 8 （D）


This is the position that Black was aiming for．He obviously was counting on the line 24

 followed：

24 自d7＋！家xd7
Otherwise White will play 25 悤 3 protect－ ing g2．

25 崖b5＋！

White has won a decisive tempo to drag and drop his queen back home．

##  ㄸxf1

As a result of his superb defence，White has emerged a piece ahead and won the game later．

Here is a sophisticated case of decoy：


Inarkiev－Kazhgaleev
Moscow 2008
Black is the first to decoy his opponent＇s king：

40 拪gl 断h 3 is a very simple win for Black．


40．．．．Ef5？
Sad but true．One suspects that time－trouble contributed to this losing move．Black could instead have delivered checkmate by force：
数f4（ 43 多h4


41 㟶xe7＋！！
 White wins material．


## 42 嫘 $\mathrm{d} 7+$ 皃f8

Black will be cruelly punished for letting the mate slip out of his grasp．

43 耝h1！！（ $D$ ）
Deflection and decoy：The queen will be
 45 苟 $7+$ is only a draw．



w


Now White needs to decoy his opponent＇s king onto its back rank．

Black loses his queen．

## Exercises


 Black is obviously better，but will that be enough for a win？Or is there something better？


Black is very weak on his light squares．Can we use this fact to win material？


Decoy your opponent＇s king！


Drag out an enemy piece to promote your pawn.


Black's rooks are cooperating perfectly; e.g., 36 a7? 总al + 37 寫b 3 f $2-+$. Can we break their synergy, and decoy a rook onto a mined square at the same time?


Chase the queen using decoys until she must surrender.


Find a way to break Black's defensive construction.


Try to calculate as far as you can the attack against Black's king. A hint: it is going for a walk to b3!

## 5 Double Attack

Double attack is the most common tactical method．It can be successfully applied by ev－ ery chess piece，as they are all capable of at－ tacking two targets at the same time．

Some other familiar tactical methods are spe－ cific cases of a double attack．Discovered attack is most effective when the moving piece also threatens something（and thus the discovered attack becomes a double attack）．Likewise， clearance is also most effective when we per－ form it with gain of tempo．

Double attacks are often employed in pun－ ishing weak opening play．Here is an example featuring short－range pieces at work－knights and pawns in this case，although the king is also an effective double－attacker，given the right cir－ cumstances．

## Bojkov－Panbukchian

Bulgarian Ch，Pleven 2005
 Qf3 0 c 6 ？

In my opinion this move is an inaccuracy， and $5 \ldots \mathrm{a}$ or $5 \ldots \mathrm{c} 6$ is better．



This advance is based on a double attack．
7．．．$巳 \mathrm{~b} 4$
7．．． $0 x \mathrm{x} 5$ ？？loses due to the knight fork 8


## 8 c 4 c 6

Black needs to challenge White＇s strong cen－ tre．In case of $8 \ldots$ ．．．e 9 鼻f4，simple development brings White a superior endgame： $9 . .0 \mathrm{a} 610$ d6 cxd6 11 0xd6＋寞xd6 12 宸xd6 嵩xd6 13崽xd6 with two bishops and better prospects．

## 9 dxc6 数a5？

This is wrong in an underdeveloped posi－ tion．For better or worse，Black had to liquidate to an endgame by $9 \ldots$ ．．．bxc6 10 田xd8＋臽xd8 11 Qbd4 c5 12 a 3 cxd4 13 axb4．

Note that the natural 9．．．©xc6？is impossible，



Two forks are in the air（12 $0 \times x 7+$ or 12 Qc7＋in case of $11 \ldots$ ．．．te8），so Black needs to proceed with $11 \ldots$ 圄e6，but then White is com－ pletely dominating： 12 鼻f4 h6 13 解 $6+$ fxe6 $140-0-0+$ winning．

10 真d2 0 e4
Black was counting on this＇counterattack＇， but he lacks resources to back it up． $10 \ldots$ ．．．bxc6 was somewhat more resilient，although after 11 a3 cxb5 12 axb4 凿c7 13 c5（or 13 cxb5！？） White has a huge advantage．

## 11 䙾xb4

Deflecting Black＇s queen away from defend－ ing the c 7 －square．Now a fork by $\widehat{0} 7$ will be a threat．

## 

The final blunder，but Black is lost in any

$150-0-0!$ ？（ 15 cxb 7 鼻xb7 $160-0-0$ ） $15 \ldots . . \mathrm{bxc} 6$ 16 昌 $x d 2+$ 全d7 17 全e2 and White wins． 13 气c $7+$ 家d8（D）


## 140 d5 1－0

A double attack against the queen and the c7－square terminates Black＇s resistance．After
 double attack，this time also a zwischenzug： 16 c7＋．

In the previous game，the double attacks were performed by short－range pieces－knights and pawns．Long－range pieces such as the bishop are also highly effective for this purpose，and their double attacks may also be harder to fore－ see：

## Bojkov－Geirnaert <br> Groningen 2008




I needed a win to secure the overall tourna－ ment victory，so I had prepared a sharp line， with a small trap in it，into which my opponent fell！

9 c4！？鼻xf3？
A dubious and risky decision．

Black falls into the trap．After 11．．．Wid6（rel－ atively best） $120-0-0$ White enjoys a strong ini－ tiative：all his pieces will soon join the fray，and to boot he has a huge development advantage and the bishop－pair．Still，this was the lesser evil， as after the move in the text White achieves more．

12 㟽x4 $0 \times \mathrm{xg} 4$（ $D$ ）
13 鼻5


A double attack：the obvious one is against the knight，and the other is against the b7－square．

13．．． 9 f6 14 㑒 88
Black can neither protect the pawn，nor move it，since he would lose a whole rook after 14．．．b6 15 盆b7。

## 14．．．a5 15 䀂d4！

White is not in a hurry to recapture the pawn． With the help of the threat to trap the rook， White will force Black to move his knight，thus creating another double attack．

Forced．


The bishop has worked gloriously and can now collect its prey．

号ad1 0 f

Now White＇s second bishop can show its worth．

## 25 f4！e4

Opting for a swift execution．25．．．exf4 26息xf4 is yet another double attack of sorts－the bishop is hitting the b8－rook and supporting Ee5\＃．

26 邑e5\＃（1－0）

Now let＇s see the rook in action．


Bojkov－Misojčić Golubac 2008

Black is trying to evacuate his king to the queenside．His possible plan is ．．．af8，and then to transfer his king by ．．．． $6 \mathrm{c} 8 \mathrm{~d} 8 \mathrm{c} 8-\mathrm{b} 7$ ，which will leave him ultra－solid．Fortunately，I had seen a good idea in advance：

## 23 d4

This move opens the d－file for the dl－rook， and cuts off the black king＇s route to safety．The following blows are easy to foresee：

## 23．．．cxd4

23．．．exd4 leaves the queens facing one an－ other，and so overloads the black king： 24 Exf7＋暒xf7 25 畨xd6 nets a queen．

## 24 皆xd4 宸c5

Now the white rooks will work in harmony on the seventh flank．The first one is sacrificed to enable the other to triumph：

Now it is the turn of the queen，which has the greatest capacity of all for creating double attacks，or indeed multiple attacks．A funny case of mutual chess blindness happened in the following game：

## Madan－G．Jones

Jessie Gilbert Memorial，Coulsdon 2008
空g76（e3 cxd4 7 cxd4

First Black blundered badly with．．．
7．．． $2 \mathrm{h6}$ ？？（ D ）
But this was left unpunished by his oppo－ nent：


8 c3？
Alex Baburin wrote：＂In the first game where this position occurred（Vasiukov－Razuvaev， Polanica Zdroj 1972）White played the correct 8 晋c1！．Since then about $60 \%$ of all players who reached this position with White found that move．But many didn＇t，including some GMs．Gawain Jones joined a number of GMs who got seduced by the idea ．．．仓h6－f5－Razu－ vaev，Ftačnik and Degraeve．I believe that Alex－ ander Shabalov also made that mistake．＂

This story only shows how difficult some double attacks can be to spot，especially if they are performed from very far away．After all， here White does not even have to find a combi－ nation，but rather a simple double－attacking move．After 8．．．新5 the game ended later in a draw．

## How Does it Work？

First of all we are going to demonstrate the double attack with the help of a discovered at－ tack．


Diamant－Fier
Santos 2008

Black would very much like to remove his knight from e5，unleashing the power of his rooks－better still if the knight can also threaten something at the same time，as this will give White no time to escape．However，Black needs to be precise－only one square is correct：

## 32．．． 0 d3！0－1

Attacking both rooks，with the point that af－ ter 33 登xe7 Black has a zwischenzug that wins an exchange： $33 . .0 \times \mathrm{xf} 2+$ ．The importance of the d3－square for the knight is demonstrated by the line $32 . . .9 \mathrm{~g} 4$ ？ 33 品ff1，where White keeps everything intact（the b6－bishop is eyeing the f2－square！）．After the text－move， $33^{\text {® }} \mathrm{fe} 2$ is met by $33 . .0 \times 1$ ．

A closely related idea is the skewer，in which two pieces are attacked along the same line．We must be very wary of vulnerable lines such as this．


Beliavsky－Khamrakulov Pamplona 2007

## 27．．．膤xe4！0－1

Black clears the f－file．After 28 fxe 4 he forces the white king onto this line and wins material：


In the following diagram，vulnerable pieces on the same diagonal are exploited．

Black has ideas of winning the h2－pawn，but straightforward measures do not prove effec－ tive： $1 .$. 賣 $e 5$ is well met by 2 f 4 ．Therefore，he first needs to tempt the queen closer：

1．．．f4！ 2 葢xf4
2 背d3 allows a double attack by $2 \ldots$ ．．．卛h4， while after 2 㴔f 3 峟h4 3 h3 0 e5 and ．．．f3 White＇s kingside collapses．


Blagojević－Čabrilo
Yugoslavia 2000

## 

White no longer has a reply to the skewer on this diagonal．With the loss of the vital h2－ pawn，White＇s position disintegrates and his king is fatally exposed．

## 4 紧d2

 not cover his king： 6 期h $30 \mathrm{xf} 2+$ ．

Preparing a decisive discovered and double attack．

White did not wait to see the final tactic，


Here is an example where Black profited from the unfortunate locations of a queen and a bishop．


A．Horvath－G．Kovacs
Hungarian Ch，Nyiregyhaza 2008

White blundered badly：


Often we need to work to create a double at－ tack．Here we see a decoy used for this purpose：


Volokitin－Kariakin
Foros 2008
30 e5＋
With this multi－purpose move，White opens a diagonal for his bishop and decoys his oppo－ nent＇s king into a series of decisive blows，two of them based on double attack．

30．．．猡d7（D）
30．．．猡xe5？walks into a fork after an ex－ change of bishops： 31 賣xb3 cxb3 32 合d $3+$

30．．． 7 defends the b 7 －knight but steps into a pin，and White simply captures by 31 貝xb3．


The game continuation allows a move that interferes with the black rooks＇defence of one another，thus leaving the f2－rook and the b7－ knight both under attack：

31 真f3 志xb2 32 㑒 $x b 7$
White won material and later converted his extra knight into a full point．

In the next example，two decoy ideas are used to set up a decisive double attack：


Peredy－Bojkov
Fourmies 2006

White＇s knights are on the same line as the black queen，but for the moment the e3－knight is firmly defended by the white queen．The fact that Black has a light－squared bishop and White is holding on the dark squares is not in my fa－ vour．So first I decoy his knight onto a light square：

## 

And then the king：

## 33．．．㟶e2＋！0－1


A double attack may be prepared by remov－ ing a vital defensive piece．


Ionesi－Murariu<br>Predeal 2006

Here White has an excellent bishop，which suggests the idea of a destructive sacrifice：

## 27．．． $\mathbf{\Xi x c} 6!28$ 送xc6

Black has not only deflected the rook from covering the e4－square，but also decoyed it to a vulnerable position．

## 28．．．少e4 0－1

This is in fact a triple attack：against the king （29．．．${ }^{\omega} \times \mathrm{xg} 2 \#$ ），against the rook，and against the queen（ $29 \ldots \mathrm{e} 2+$ ）．No wonder that White de－ cided he had seen enough．

Seeking out overloaded pieces can help us find sore points in the enemy＇s camp，and allow us to target several pieces with double attacks．


Filipowicz－Silva
Varna Olympiad 1962
After 25 䈍c7！1－0 it becomes clear that the black queen had too many duties．Thanks to the double attack on the seventh rank White de－ flects it away from the knight．After 25．．．${ }_{\text {We }} \mathrm{xc} 7$ 26 置xe4 White has another double attack，this
 and 28 欒h8\＃is the second crucial threat）．

In the following example both players de－ livered double attacks until an endgame was reached．


Grishchuk－Volokitin
Russian Team Ch，Sochi 2007

## 

Black was counting on this double attack to solve his problems．

17 象b1 wxa4
Another double attack，17．．． e 3 ，was better although even here White retains the better

 24 邑xe4 $\pm$ ．In the inevitable rook endgame，the white pawns should be faster．

18 寝xa8 气e3 19 定d3！？
White is ready to part with his superfluous material in order to reach a technically winning endgame．

19．．．貝f5 20 wa6
皃a2 $0 \mathrm{xdl}-+$ ．
 （D）


For the moment it looks like Black has achieved a material advantage，but the next move clears the smoke：

23 写 e ！蒠xf3
After 23．．．莺e 824 㒶d2 White regains mate－ rial with interest．

24 gxf 3 f5 25 苞 5
White has a good 䈓＋真 tandem．
25．．． 0 d 426 㑒c4 0 e6
26．．．仓xf3 27 苞f5 0 d4（27．．．©xh2？ 28 㒻e2 traps the knight in the corner） 28 登xc5 $\pm$ 。
 fxe6 31 营xe6

White wins a pawn and soon the game．
31．．．c4 32 登e4 cxb3 33 㘶xb3 曷h5 34 h 4


 1－0

## Exercises



White has just freed himself from a pin by 12气d4-b3. This was a good idea, wasn't it?


White is ahead on material, but the position of his king is worrying.


White is very active, but his opponent wants to finish his development.


Profit from Black's open lines.


You need to spot an important detail.


An attack does not always need to be on the anks.


Decoy White's king to reap a rich harvest.

## 6 Knight Fork

The knight is considered to be the least powerful piece in chess (besides the pawn, of course). As the great world champion Jose Raul Capablanca taught us, the other minor piece, the bishop, is better in $90 \%$ of cases. However, due to its specific qualities the knight is a tremendously dangerous piece. It is nimble and its jumps can be quite shocking. That is why a double attack by a knight is usually distinguished from other double attacks and called a fork.

A single knight may cause incredible damage in the right circumstances:


Alb. Beliavsky
1st Prize, Korolkov-100 Jubilee, 2008

First White decoys his opponent's pieces into forks:



White is now a queen and two rooks down a deficit of approximately 19 'pawns'. His only remaining piece is a knight. But a brave one...
气xg8+(D)


The knight has managed to remove most of Black's army. Now it is the king's turn to suffer:
6...

Our opponent will not be very eager to walk into a fork, so we may need to force it. Deflection and decoy are very common methods:


Ligterink - Pachman<br>Donner Memorial, Amsterdam 1994

## 21 重 $\times 15$ cxd5

White seems to be in an unpleasant pin, but he has fully appreciated the power of his horse.

## 22 潄xc7！

Deflection from the vital f6－square．
22．．．喭xc7？
 with some chances for a draw．

Black realized what was coming after the forced 24．．．${ }^{\text {Exe8 }}$（D）：


25 賭 $\mathrm{g} 7+!$ ！decoys the king to g 7 ，after which the knight picks up a rook and a queen．

Deflection is especially effective in conjunc－ tion with decoy．


Pashikian－Ozturk
Istanbul 2007

## 24 嵭 $\mathrm{C} 7+!$ 1－0

It suddenly becomes clear that Black＇s queen is overloaded．

A far－advanced pawn may also be bait for a piece to be forked（see following diagram）：

The passed pawn on b3 is well blockaded＇ $\mathfrak{a}$ la Nimzowitsch＇with a knight．However，Black can force a change of guard：


Semionova－Alexandrova
Alushta（Women＇s Zonal） 1999

The knight will usher the b－pawn through to promotion．Because of the possible fork on d2， the pawn is invulnerable．





One last fork before the curtain falls．
A dominant position of a rook and knight duo can even overpower a queen，as in the fol－ lowing group of diagrams．


Raetsky－Avrukh
Biel 1996

## 18．．．．．c1！0－1

The next diagram features a similar motif， with the knight executing the fork on a slightly different square．In the second diagram over－ leaf，the decoy is prefaced by an exchange sac－ rifice．


Fedorowicz - Pieterse
Ostend 1987
21 ตc8! 1-0


## Kounalakis - Mastrovasilis

European Ch, Plovdiv 2008

## 23...Exd4! 0-1

 nets a knight for Black.


Felgaer - Peralta
Argentine Ch, La Plata 2008

In this position it looks like Black is in trouble, but the tricky knight decides the game by carrying out the decoy on a totally unexpected square.

## 

The forking threat may be useful in attacking weak points.


Black's troops are awkwardly placed. In this case forking will give White an option to attack on c 7 for free.

21 亶b6! 息xh3
$21 . . . \mathrm{cxb6} 22$ )xb6 nets at least a pawn for White.

## 22 ©xc7

Another fork.

We should also examine the fork as a defensive method:

E. Pähtz - Stefanova

Reykjavik 2008

Elisabeth Pähtz could have saved a half－ point here，if she had made the most of her tricky knight．

67 皃al？
She had to exchange queens first，and ad－ vance her passed pawn as far as possible： 67訔xc2＋觡xc268g6气e469g7 9 f6 and now 70 0 g 4 ！is an excellent multi－purpose manoeuvre －the knight is attacking the pawn，deflecting the knight，and in fact is still controlling the f1－ square due to the fork on e3！After 70．．． $0 \times \mathrm{x} 4$
 choice between a simple draw with 73 楼 xg 4 or stalemate after 73 世e2＋果xc2．

訔 $\mathrm{b} 3+74$ 身c1 宸xa3＋0－1

Chess－players are often advised not to play for traps．And it is a good piece of advice in those cases where the move that lays the trap does not have any other useful purpose．But if you have a chance to set a trap while furthering your constructive ideas in the position，you should do not hesitate to do so．Even if the chances that your opponent will fall into it are small，you are losing nothing．


Bojkov－Schaufelberger
2nd Bundesliga 2007／8

Black＇s obvious plan is to occupy the e－file with his rooks and initiate simplifications．If I want to keep my slight advantage I need to find the correct way to hinder his plans．

## 16 ©g5！

I spent quite a lot of time on this move．Little by little I realized that if he chooses the most natural reply his queen might be hanging！

## 16．．．』ce8！

Correct！To his credit，my experienced oppo－ nent sensed or most probably saw the danger：

 did not bring immediate victory，but I benefited from the fact that Black＇s rook abandoned the open c－file．I kept a slight edge and went on to win fairly quickly after some errors by my op－ ponent：

客f7？ 24 角b5 1－0

Nisipeanu discovered that Black missed a wonderful and unexpected knight fork in the next position：


Zhadanov－Tutulan
Romania 2003

What？You do not believe him？You do not see a black knight on the board？There，he will show you：

1．．．宸d1＋！！
 works．

兾xc8 宴xf48 gxf4 a5 is also winning for Black．

Now rather than $4 \ldots$ ．．cxdl ${ }_{\text {wisk }}$ Black plays：
4．．．cxd1 $0+!$ ！ 5 皙b3 $0 x e 3$ and when the smoke clears，we see that Black is winning： 6





Unfortunately for Black，he did not appreci－ ate the greatness of the underpromotion and
嘒b5 5 會d1 the game became unclear．

Here is a sophisticated case of a fork：


A．Gonzalez Perez－Placencia Santa Clara 2003

Like any other combination，a knight fork may need to be carefully prepared．We have seen various ways of achieving it，and here is one more，in which the attacker first sacrifices a bishop，then a rook，and finally a queen in order to bring his knight to the juicy squares around the enemy king and start the harvest．

## 15 变xh6！！

This sacrifice has the modest purpose of gaining a tempo．In the game White played the ineffective $15 \geqslant \mathrm{~g} 5+$ ？and went on to draw．

Decoy．
17．．．．exf 18 愣xh6＋！！（D）


Another decoy．
18．．．嵩g8
No，thank you very much（18．．．올xh6 19


## 19 契h8＋！！

The gift must nevertheless be accepted．

White emerges two pawns up．His knight is in danger，but with a few subtle moves and a pawn he manages to retreat it back home．

21．．．\＃b8 22 ตf
 ene

White has a winning position．

## Exercises



Chop off a pawn．


White has very active pieces．Make use of them．


Does White need to retreat the knight?


Do you recognize the pattern?


Which is true? $49 . . .8 \mathrm{f} 3+$ is:
A) good for Black and gives him winning chances.
B) a blunder and loses the game.


Use as many forces as you can to crack the f7-square.

## 7 Discovered Attack

A discovered attack occurs when a piece moves， unmasking an attack from a piece that stands behind it．Obviously the attacking piece must be a long－range line－moving piece（bishop，rook or queen）．

When the discovered attack is against the king，this is a special case that is called a dis－ covered check．If the piece that moves also gives check，then we have a double check－a very dangerous situation for the king since his only defence in that case is to flee as it is impos－ sible to block both checks simultaneously or to capture both checking pieces．

A famous attacking mechanism called the see－saw（or the windmill）is based on repeated discovered checks．These make it possible to capture several pieces because the opponent is busy moving his king out of check．

## Gelashvili－Gagunashvili <br> Batumi 2001

全xd7＋ 0 bxd76d3e5702d58exd50xd5





## 18 f4！

Black＇s opening play has been none too im－ pressive，as White has been able to occupy ex－ cellent positions with his pieces．He now opens
a file for his second rook，the only piece that was not yet playing an active role．With all his troops involved in the attack，it is no wonder that Black＇s position soon collapses．

18．．．exf4 19 ©xf4 总g4？（D）


A blunder in a bad position．Curiously the rook is vulnerable on g4．

20 066！
The first discovered attack．Both Black＇s rook and queen are hanging．

## 20．．．鬯h4！

Black finds a clever way to prolong the
寞f8 23 區xf7 would lead to immediate mate．

21 亘 $x f 7!!(D)$


White is breaking in．He now opens all the lines towards the black king and sets up a vari－ ety of discovered attacks．

## 21．．．${ }^{\mathbf{3} x c} 4$

In case of 21．．．㡙xf7 White uses the double check idea to decoy Black＇s king out into the open．You have already seen several examples of the type of king－hunt that then ensues： 22 Qd8＋＋象g6（22．．．
 to forced mate after 25 ．．．hxg6 26 㦗xg7＋皆h5




A counterattack by 21 ．．．．${ }^{\mathbf{m} x g 3+}$ does not
 Black needs to step into a double check again：
 leaves White a rook ahead） 24 d $8++$ and after this White＇s task is pure pleasure： 24 ．．．fgg 25
 e6 6 did 427 en＋and mate is coming soon．

21．．．．${ }^{\text {8 }}$ xg3 also gives White time to wrap up the game in style： 22 酋xg7＋ leads to another double check and then mate：

 협xg7 25 曹f7＋



White is not in a hurry．He is creating a see－ saw against which Black is helpless．

## 

曾 $\mathrm{g} 7+{ }^{(1)} \mathrm{h} 8$ and White can set the see－saw in
 and Black is totally helpless．

## 25 分xd4 害e5

25．．．cxd4 26 夏xd4＋鼻e5 27 鼻xe5\＃．
26 昆exe5 h6（ $D$ ）
Now the stage is set for the see－saw．



The mechanism is working，and Black re－ signed rather than see all his pieces disappear



Various features can help us detect when a discovered attack is effective：

1）The piece that we attack is undefended．
2）Our attacking piece is supported by our pieces．

3）The moving piece also attacks something （thus a discovered attack becomes a double at－ tack）．


Wirthensohn－Nemet Swiss open Ch，Lucerne 1994

Here all three features apply．
22．．． 0 e3！0－1
White threw in the towel because：
1）White＇s queen is under attack and is un－ defended．

2）Black＇s queen supported by both the rook and the pawn．

3）The knight that has moved to e3 attacks a rook，and wins it thanks to a zwischenzug： 23



Tiviakov－Langrock<br>European Union Ch，Liverpool 2008

Hint 2 does not matter if the attacked piece is of higher value：

## 36 分5！䴣e8

The discovered piece is not protected，but if 36．．．登xd2 the moved knight wins a whole queen with 37 e $7+$ ．

## 

Various tactical methods can help us suc－ cessfully apply the double attack．


Riazantsev－Maletin
Moscow 2008

White has a mechanism for a discovered at－ tack（such a mechanism is known as a＇bat－ tery＇），namely the cl－rook and the c5－knight． But if he continues with 25 xe6＋to win the knight on c7，the latter can recapture on e6 and thus sidestep the attack．White needs more sta－ ble prey on c7．A decoy will help prepare the attack：

## 25 音xc7！1－0



Deflection can also lay the groundwork for a discovered attack：


Amonatov－Zemtsov<br>Moscow 2008

At first glance it is hard to foresee how White can make good use of a discovered attack． However，he finds a way to deflect the d6－pawn and open the d－file．The idea of a knight fork adds the final ingredient to the combination．

17 Q 5 ！ $9 \times 5$


罳xe4（ $D$ ）


 1－0

We have already seen some examples in which a battery（a mechanism for a discovered attack）already existed and the attacker was simply trying to find the best way to make use of it．Now we shall see how such a mechanism can be created in the cut－and－thrust of a sharp
battle，without giving the opponent any respite to escape．


Korchnoi－Šolak
Basle 2002

First White decoys Black＇s king into a check．
15 芭xd6！！ 0 g 4
The basic idea of the combination becomes
 battery of queen on d2 and c3－knight）16．．． and exploiting it after $17 \triangleq g 5+$ as the king has to step onto a mined square： $17 \ldots$ ．．． and White wins the queen．

16 嵩g5＋
White insists．
16．．．果xd6
After 16．．．${ }^{\text {gede }} 8$ White can sacrifice his queen to hunt down the enemy king： 17 曽hd1！莫h6



17 暗 $\mathbf{d} 2+(D)$


17．．．宵e6
 has to surrender his queen in any case．

18 包5 5 皃 6

Black decided to cut short his agony．18．．．息e7 19 分d5＋

19 分 d \＃（1－0）
When you construct a mechanism for a dis－ covered attack and your opponent is tied up and can hardly move，always try to find the best way to collect your bonuses．


Glek－Zapata
Santo Domingo（blitz） 2002

White creates the battery with a rook sacri－ fice：

The alternative defence $2 . . . f 6$ also fails after the calm 3 嘪e4！，which takes control over the vital h7－square and thus prevents Black＇s queen from covering its king：3．．．響d74 寞f5（4 寞g5＋， as given by Glek，wins as well）4．．．㘘e8 5 黑g6
 mated．

Now care is needed：
3 察e4！
White is in no hurry．Black＇s king can＇t go anywhere，and the discovered check can wait until more reserves have been brought up，and it will be more effective．

3．．． 0 e 7



4 寞g5＋
White has a quicker forced mate by 4 黑f8＋


## 


5．．．厔xe7



7 嶿h6\# (1-0)
When the attacker controls all the vital lines, material tends to be a secondary factor:

A. Gonzalez - Espinosa

Cuba 2004
Black consistently clears the $g$-file and the long diagonal.


3...e3+4鼻f3

Now Black creates a deadly mating mechanism based on a discovered check:

## 




## Exercises



White already has a battery set up, so you need only find the best way to use it.


Unleash the power of your pieces!


The position is teeming with possible discovered attacks, but what is the best way forward?


Everything is forced, isn't it?






¿MOY วəs noא Ođ ・フene



In 1958 at the Olympiad in Munich，young Mikhail Tal was approached by the world cham－ pion Mikhail Botvinnik．＂Why did you sacri－ fice a pawn？＂asked the champion．The reply： ＂It was getting in my way．＂

Sometimes one of our pieces is standing in the way of a more important one．But spending time moving the poorly－placed piece might give the opponent time to organize his defences． That is why we may instead seek to sacrifice the piece（or a pawn）to clear an important line or square without losing any time－or，even better， with a gain of time．

Nestorović－Popchev<br>Stara Pazova 2008




A double attack．
8．．．a5 9 a3？
Black has not played the opening well，and White could have taken full advantage by 9

 with the point that $14 \ldots$ 是xd5 15 縚xc2！是xc4？ loses to 16 酋 $\mathrm{ad} \mathrm{l}+$－

## 9．．．雰xx5！ 10 axb4




## 

This is also a double attack．White is threaten－ ing 13 皿b5＋，followed by mate on d 8 ，so the h6－knight is lost．However tempting this idea may be，it is wrong．Correct is $120-0 \ \mathrm{f} 513$鼻xf5 觜xf5 14 息d4，with approximate equality．

12．．．0－0！ 13 窝xh6（ $D$ ）
13．．．axb4！
Line clearance．Black has given up a piece， but creates an attack on the open a－file．

## 14 娄e3

Anything else loses（for example， 14 訔xb4？具xh6 + ）．The queen must leave the d 2 －square while protecting the bishop．


14．．．宽c3！
Obstruction！This prevents the escape of the white king by 15 tog d 2 ．

15 bxc3 bxc3（ $D$ ）


Mate looks inevitable now．But White had foreseen the idea：

16 鬼 $\mathrm{a6}$ ！
The best defence：White employs clearance and obstruction for defensive purposes．Now the queen can remove the vital c3－pawn．

## 16．．．膤xe3＋！


17 完x 3 ？！
More resilient was 17 fxe3 ${ }^{\circ} \mathrm{Ex} \times 618$ dibl酋e8！（Black is at most slightly better after

 bev：
a） 19 曾d 5 is met by $19 \ldots$ 息d7！，preventing White＇s idea of 20 总b5 and 21 额cl．After 20
芭xd5 酋d6！？White is basically lost．
b）Also not helpful is 19 d 4 宽e6 20 b 3啹ea8 followed by ．．．c5－c4．



 for White is 27 皃c4，after which Black may
 30 © 5 f6） $27 \ldots$ ．．． $34+28$ d 4 c5 Black emerges with two extra pawns．

17．．．』xa6（ $D$ ）


## 18 官b1

It looks like Black＇s attack has run out of steam．White has exchanged most of the pieces， including the queens，and now the white king has covered his main weakness．However．．．

18．．．${ }^{\text {员h3！}}(D)$－＋


The third clearance of a line．Note that Black does it with the gain of a tempo！Now 19．．．』fa8 is the main threat，but the double attack by 19．．．畕xg2 must also be taken into account．

## 19 2d4

Or 19 gxh 3 苞fa 820 曾 $\mathrm{d} 8+$（deflection）
 doubling of the rooks on the a－file．

19．．．eb6＋20 ©b3（D）


Now comes the last clearance－this time of a diagonal．

20．．．惫xb3＋！！ 21 cxb3 㒻f5＋ 22 東c1

22．．．曽 18 0－1
 turn to a8．

In the following friendly blitz game I man－ aged to perform all the ideas of a clearance：

## Bojkov－Ermenkov

Sofia（blitz） 2002

 d5 10 e5 ©d7 11 h 3 真xf3 12 gxf3 e6 13 ©c3寞e7 $14 \mathrm{f4} \mathrm{~g} 615$ 它h1 0－0（D）


Objectively，White＇s position is dubious． Seeking counterplay，I clear the diagonal for
my dark－squared bishop and establish a base near his king．

## 16 f5 gxf5 17 䙾h6 总e8？（ $D$ ）

17．．． 18車xf8 真xf8 White＇s pawns are rather weak．


## 18 罳xa6！

Clearing a line for my rook，while also grab－ bing a pawn，and threatening to take a second one with yet another double attack．

18．．．
Before the final blow I improve the position of the bishop．



And finally comes a cleaning of a square for my most powerful piece．

22 ב̊g8＋！1－0

Usually a clearance aims to make way for our major pieces．This is logical，since their power is more significant，and more likely to be sufficient to justify a material sacrifice．

In the following diagram，the bishop on f 4 is not only hindering the queen＇s road to f 7 ，but it prevents the white rook from taking part in the

attack．So the bishop must vacate its post，pref－ erably with tempo！

23 是 7 ！
This is not only clearance，but also a decoy． If our logical analysis enables us to spot this move，then we will surely foresee the next two．

23．．．䇾xc7 24 炭xf7＋（D）


The first acquisition．
24．．．啲h8 25 当h4 1－0
The second，and decisive achievement－the rook is free to attack．Now we can fully appre－ ciate the importance of 23 昷c7－Black lacks the $25 \ldots 0 \mathrm{f} 6 / \mathrm{f} 8$ resource．After 25 菑h4 Black can only move the h－pawn：
a） $25 \ldots \mathrm{~h} 526$ wiwg（practical advice：when you calculated the position in advance，it would be enough to stop your calculations here：for the piece White wins three pawns and creates a strong attack）26．．．8f8 27 岲xh5＋然g8 and now comes another clearance－of a diagonal： 28 d6 幽d7 29 是c4＋
b） $25 \ldots$ h6 26 饾xh6＋．This time the deflec－


In the next example，we see a key diagonal being cleared，and this has a decisive impact on the position：


Arencibia－Zapata
Merida 2007

Most of White＇s pieces are pointing at his opponent＇s king．However，he still needs to bring up some reinforcements before he can successfully break through．Two pieces are not involved into the assault，and we must take care of them．

## 20 xd5！

Clearing the long diagonal for the bishop． The fact that White will lose the knight is not that important since he will gain a great deal of attacking power．



## 

Black resigned in view of the line－clearances that will inevitably come：23．．．告g8 24 鼻xg6





Sometimes it is worth a large material sacri－ fice just to clear a single square．If your oppo－ nent＇s king is obstructed by his own pieces，you must take a closer look at your pieces－any check might possibly be mate．Knights can be especially effective in such situations．


Gongora－Blanco
Cuba 2004

White＇s knight could potentially deliver mate from two squares： d 8 and g 5 ．However， d 8 is well protected by the rook，and g 5 is occupied by his queen．But this square can be cleared with gain of tempo：

1 䊦g6＋！！賭e7
1．．．hxg6 2 包g5\＃．
2 隠 $7+$＋！1－0
Here is an example with multiple clearance sacrifices：


## Corrales－Ferragut <br> Cuba 2004

White first of all clears a square for his queen：

## 

But now he parts with his most powerful piece：

## 3 崄h6＋！！挡xh6 4 f5＋

The point is that with this move he manages to open a diagonal for his bishop，the fourth rank for his rook，and last，but not least，the modest pawn on f 5 will play a decisive part in the black king＇s execution．

## 4．．．日g5

White also wins after 4．．．
 6 䚁h6＋＋－





## 1－0

And mate from a8．A magnificent piece of art！

But the aim is not always to give a spectacu－ lar mate．Here we see clearance ideas leading to material gains：


## A．Byron－Motzer

Porto Mannu 2008

White＇s knight would be only too happy to occupy the c5－square．Unfortunately the rook stands there，and does not have any good re－ treat－squares．So what else might it do？

## 22 แ̈xd5！！

This is both a clearance and a decoy．

## 22．．． $0 \times 1523$ en 5

The knight arrives on its cherished square and creates a double attack．Black loses his base on b7 and will have to shed material be－ cause this will leave the c6－knight unprotected．

23．．．㟶e7（D）
23．．．曾d6 24 包xb7＋－




The next example features a sophisticated case of clearance．


L．Vajda－Ki．Georgiev Montenegro Team Ch，Herceg Novi 2008

After $160 \mathrm{f} 6+$ ？宣xf6 17 exf6＋宣 e 6 White is unable to prevent ．．．0－0－0．If 18 c 4 then Black has，at least， $18 \ldots$ ．．世木斤 d $3!?$ ，unafraid of 19 晋xe $6+?!$ fxe6（Golubev）．Instead Vajda finds an elegant
way to bring a key additional unit into the as－ sault：

## 16 蝟g5！貝xg5

Black is also suffering after 16．．．鼻xe4 17
 and 18 e 6 are good） $18 \mathrm{H} 4+\mathrm{g} 5$ ，and now 19筜 $x g 5+$ ！

17 ©f6＋！！莫xf6 18 exf6＋（D）


As Golubev points out，it turns out that with－ out the bishop on cl ，the evaluation of this posi－ tion radically changes in White＇s favour．White has invested a bishop to gain just one tempo－ but this tempo is used to bring a rook into play quickly enough to catch the enemy king in the centre．And that proves to be worth its weight in gold．

## 

The point．White occupies the central files and prevents his opponent from castling and connecting his rooks．

19．．．㯎f5
If Black immediately gives his queen away by 19．．．0－0－0 20 苞xd5，he is unlikely to survive．

20 䜌g7！（D）

20.

But now the black forces are simply para－ lysed．He never can move the queen to c5（pre－ paring ．．．．．．d8）because of Exe6＋and 憎d7\＃． White＇s task is to prepare f4 and 蔦e5．

## 21 h3 h5 22 蔦d4 h4

Otherwise 23 g 4 wins．
23 f4！
Black will inevitably lose his queen after e． e ，and White soon won．

The next example is even more impressive－ or it would have been if the correct sequence had actually been played．


Chan Weng Chee－Ly Hong Nguyen
Singapore 2005

White could have created a piece of fine chessboard art with a series of sacrifices based on clearance ideas：

## 1 르렌

Chasing away the queen，and bringing the rook into the attack．The game saw 1 㟶g $6+$ ？？ and later Black won．



And now the fireworks begin：

3 בg8+!!


畳g

## Exercises



Find a way to use your most powerful piece.


Clear a diagonal.


Rooks adore the seventh rank.


Combine clearance with decoy!


Like a bolt from the blue came...


Black's king has stayed too long in the cen tre. Find a way to attack it.


So far Black is attacking with only three eces...


Everything looks protected in White's camp. But that could change if lines are opened...

## 9 Obstruction

The term＇obstruction＇covers a variety of situa－ tions where we seek to benefit from our oppo－ nent＇s pieces being blocked in their movement by other pieces，whether they be our pieces or the opponent＇s own pieces．For example，a blockade of a passed or isolated pawn is a sim－ ple way to lessen the power of this pawn by pre－ venting it from advancing．The fact that it is fixed in place also makes it easier if we wish to attack this pawn．Furthermore，the opponent＇s pieces may in turn be restricted in their move－ ment by their own pawn；indeed，this is a factor that should be taken into account when we de－ cide on which square to blockade such a pawn．

But this is a book about tactics，and here our main focus is on more drastic cases of obstruc－ tion．If it is the enemy king that is obstructed， then this can play a vital role in our efforts to checkmate him，while obstruction also comes into play when trapping other pieces，or in pre－ venting them from playing a useful role in the defence of their king or in counterattacking our own sensitive spots．

In most positions it is a good idea to have plenty of pieces around the king，to provide him with a secure defence against the many types of tactical blows that we have seen in other chap－ ters of this book．In many of the following ex－ amples we shall see the darker side of＇defence in numbers＇as these pieces can turn out to ham－ per the king if his best policy is to flee to an－ other part of the battlefield．

We start off with a deceptive endgame posi－ tion where obstruction plays a key role（see fol－ lowing position）．

## 43．．．宵e6！！

This cunning move is the prelude to a wonder－ ful blocking idea．During the game，everybody （including the online commentators，Alexei Shirov himself and even the mighty engines） was sure that 44 h6 6 ghe 45 would now lead to a forced draw．Everyone but Levon Aronian，that is．


Shirov－Aronian
Tal Memorial，Moscow 2006

## 44 h 6

44 息c5 gives White some chances to save the game．

44．．．家xd6 45 客h5 f5 46 h7 胃h8 47 旬g6象e7！

Obviously Shirov was counting on 47 ．．．．．．．e8


48 筸g7（D）


48．．．戠e8！！
The point．This type of idea has been seen in endgame studies but is very rare in over－the－ board contests．If White now takes the rook， then Black plays ．．． til White runs out of pawn moves．In the end White will have no choice but to play b3－ Black will capture this pawn and at the same
time free its colleague on c 3 （thus ruling out stalemate）．Then he will promote his pawn and mate the white king in the corner．

Thus White cannot take the h8－rook，but Black is able to free himself and win：

 $56 \mathrm{h6}$ 象e8 57 韩f6

57．．．哭xh758自g6盖f7！0－1
If 59 h 7 then Black repeats the manoeuvre：


This was a case of a long－term blockade in order to exclude White＇s king from the game．

If you see that you have a chance for a mat－ ing attack but your opponent＇s king always es－ capes via a certain square，you should seek ways to block his access to it．As we have al－ ready noted，his own pieces may do a perfect job on your behalf．


Epstein－Tuvshintugs USA Women＇s Ch，Tulsa 2008

Black first creates a mating－net by coordi－ nating her rooks．

## 36．．．䓃ch3！ 37 惜f8

Now 37．．．e3h4＋allows the white king to slip away via the third rank，while $37 \ldots$ ．．e日 5 h4＋ provides the f5－square．But this square can be blocked！

37．．．f5＋0－1
No matter with which piece White captures， there follows 38 ．．． 5 h 4 \＃

We can cover the emergency exits using our pieces too（see following diagram）：

21 䊦h6！


Kriakvin－Kuligin
Russian Team Ch，Dagomys 2008

This move takes away the f 8 －square from the king and prepares a typical mating mecha－ nism：


The next two examples feature the blocking of lines．In this way we can prevent potential defenders from frustrating our plans by deny－ ing them access to the lines they need．


Varavin－Nizamov
Russia 2001

White first deflects an important pawn to open up the black king：

## 1 鄪xg6！hxg6

Now he will move his knight to clear the h－ file for his rook．But he must be very precise in his choice of square in order to deny Black the chance to control the critical h3－square．

2 Øf4！
The key move in the combination，blocking the vital c8－h3 diagonal．Mate is inevitable．

2．．．宣e6 3 置xe6 1－0
筧 h 8 \＃

Here is an example of line－blocking in a study by a world champion．


## A．Alekhine

Tijdschrift v．d．KNSB， 1933

White needs to exclude his opponent＇s rook if he wishes to promote his a－pawn．He man－ ages to do so both on the vertical，and on the horizontal：
$\mathbf{1 a 6}$ 曽 $\mathbf{h} 4$（ $D$ ）
 rook and 3．．．bxa3 4 a8菷 axb2 5 灵b7＋is the end．


## 2 － d 8 ！客xd8

The king has no choice but to block the back rank，with the result that the black rook cannot prevent the a－pawn from slipping through：

3 a7
White wins．
The most remarkable case of obstruction is the smothered mate．


R．Simić－Roeschlau
Schöneck 1988

White noticed the weaknesses in Black＇s camp and exploited them immediately：

## 26 亿xf7！答e8

Black declines the sacrifice，but this loses with little more than a murmur．Obviously he saw the more entertaining line that was in store for him if he accepted the offer： 26 ．．． $8 \times 7$ Vg5＋皃g8（27．．．通f8 loses prosaically： 28



Now White can give mate with the standard smothered mate mechanism，but let＇s go over it in a little detail．First White improves the posi－ tion of his knight by 29 f7＋（after the immedi－ ate 29 Ug $8+$ ？？Black is not obliged to take back with the rook！）29．．．多g8 30 号6＋＋（the double check is an essential ingredient，as the knight now covers g8）30．．．s s h 8 ．Now White decoys a piece to $g 8$ to block its king： 31 挡g8＋！苞xg8 （now the king cannot make the capture）and fi－ nally delivers the smothered mate： $32 \Omega \mathrm{f} 7 \mathrm{\#}$ ．

等xe6 34 亚xe6＋1－0

Here is a more sophisticated example，with the use of two knights：


Smirin－Ribeiro
Las Palmas 1997

## 16 血xh7＋！

This is an important intermezzo，which de－ flects the black knight from the defence of the g8－square． 16 h $66++$ 家 817 㟶g8＋？？can be met by $17 . . . \varrho x g 8$ ．

1－0
After 16 ．．．Oxh 17 Qh6＋＋gh8 18 曹g8 Black can only capture with the rook，leaving the f7－square ripe for invasion：18．．．．exg8 19


We may sacrifice material in order to block an important square or line which an enemy piece needs．In the next example，the sacrificed material is recouped with substantial interest．


Reinderman－Ushenina
Wijk aan Zee 2008
Black＇s queen looks vulnerable in front of its pawn－chain．However，a direct attack fails
because the queen finds sanctuary on the king－ side．But the emergency exit can be shut off：

28 e5！
The most refined approach． 28 宣xf6？！is an－ other way of winning the queen，but Black earns two rooks for it： 28 ．．．gxf6 29 尊 d 5 exd5 30 －$x \mathrm{xd} 5 \pm$ ．



Black has only a rook and two pawns for the queen，and later lost．

## Obstruction as a Defensive Method

As mentioned earlier，obstruction may take the form of excluding pieces from the game．Here is a remarkable example：


W．Rudolph<br>The Chess Amateur， 1911

## 

White first deflects Black＇s king in order to win important tempi to close（block）the posi－ tion．

1．．．自xa4
 White even wins．
$2 \mathrm{~b} 3+$ 身b5 $3 \mathrm{c} 4+$ 禺c6 $4 \mathrm{~d} 5+$ 禺d75 e6＋觬xd86 $65(D)$


Black is two rooks and a bishop ahead，but nevertheless he cannot win．Rooks need open files，while the bishop is colour－blind and can only attack dark squares．

The last example was of course artificial，but related ideas can be seen in real games too：

B


## A．Petrosian－Hazai

Schilde（Under－18） 1970

## 45．．．断b6！

Black tries his last chance，and it works．

White is hypnotized by the value of a whole queen．He needed to decline the gift，keep the knight on the board and target the a5－pawn．His plan should thus be 迷c3（or部b3－a4．In that case he will win only a pawn， but he will gradually make progress as the posi－ tion will not be fully blocked．

46．．．cxb6 47 h4

Apparently opening the game，but it is illu－ sory．

## 47．．．gxh4 48 挡d2

Or 48 曹cl h3 49 謄h1 h2！．
48．．．h3
Possibly this was the idea White missed when he decided to take the queen．

49 gxh3 h4（D）


White is a queen for a bishop ahead but to no avail．The game soon ended peacefully：



## Interference

Before we proceed with the exercises，we should take a look at the tactical method called inter－ ference．Most writers consider it a distinct tacti－ cal method，but its essential idea is obstruction， so I have decided to include it in this chapter．

It often occurs that two of our opponent＇s pieces are carrying out important functions via lines that intersect at a particular square．Per－ haps a bishop is protecting an important square via a diagonal，and a rook is carrying out a simi－ lar function via a file．At the point where the file and diagonal intersect，we should look for ways to interfere with their operations by putting one of our own pieces there（we might also take ad－ vantage by forcing one of our opponent＇s pieces to step onto this square）．No matter how our op－ ponent takes our piece，the harmony is broken， and one of these pieces will no longer be per－ forming its defensive duty．This complicated－ sounding formula is best shown by an example （see following diagram）：

For the moment White＇s queen is protecting the knight，and the rook on d 2 guards the whole


Martinović－Scherbakov
Belgrade 2000
second rank．However，Black＇s next move de－ stroyed all their happiness，and led to a quick disaster for White：

## 33．．．．．e2！ 34 ©xh6＋

This desperate move gives the white king some breathing space． 34 ex 2 loses at once to $34 \ldots$ ．．宸xf1＋35 5 g5\＃．Other moves are no good，since Black has mating threats，and 34档xe2 loses material．
 g4 貝f $2+0-1$

The next example is an even purer case，and a rare practical instance of a study theme known as a＇Novotny＇．


Miles－Pritchett<br>Lloyds Bank Masters，London 1982

White seems to be facing inevitable mate， while everything in Black＇s camp looks perfect． The bishop is protecting the vital g 7 －square， and is untouchable，the two rooks protect each other，and the back rank looks firmly protected．

It took Tony Miles only one move to clarify the situation in his favour，but what a move that was：

## 34 置 5 5！1－0

Interference in all its glory．From being the most modest onlooker at the party，the bishop becomes the Belle of the Ball．It attacks g7， defends b2，neutralizes its black counterpart， and cuts the communication between the rooks． What else can we ask of a single move？The lines are simple：
a） 34 ．．． 2 xe5（now the c3－bishop does not defend g7） 35 数xg7\＃．
b） $34 \ldots$ ．．．$\times$ x $2+$ leads nowhere： 35 全 $x b 2$ ．
c） $34 \ldots$ ．．． e xe 5 leaves the e 8 －rook undefended：
 38 胃xe8\＃．

## Exercises



Mate in two．


Use obstruction to create a mating－net．


If Black tries to win the pinned piece immediately by $33 . .0 \mathrm{~d} 8$, he will be disappointed after 34 䍐a4. So...


Black missed a golden opportunity here.


Should Black retreat?


Use obstruction to win material.


How does Black evade White's cunning attempt to secure a draw?


Black first frees an open line, and then freezes his opponent's defences.

## 10 Removing the Defender

The idea of removing the defender is one of the most common tactical ideas in chess．We have already encountered instances where a key de－ fender is removed by deflection，overloading， pin，or other tactical methods，but in this chap－ ter we shall be focusing on the more direct case of the defender being physically removed by exchange or sacrifice．

When the defences are becoming stretched， there will be some relatively weak links in the defensive chain，normally in the form of key points that are defended only by one piece． Finding and destroying such pieces is then the main task for the attacker．Pawns in front of the enemy king are often a natural target for a de－ structive sacrifice．Once the pawn－shield is shat－ tered，the enemy king becomes an easy target for the remaining attacking pieces．

The king is especially vulnerable to this type of sacrifice when it has remained in the centre for too long，as we see in the following exam－ ple．

## Bojkov－Yasim

Istanbul 2006



员ae1 g6？（ $D$ ）


A king in the centre should sound alarm bells，especially when the attacking forces have as much freedom as White＇s do here．I did not hesitate long before sacrificing；indeed，I had this in mind when playing 120 h 5 ．It is not so difficult to assess：Black is permanently de－ prived of his castling rights，and will have no meaningful pawn－cover，making him an easy prey．The attacker will always enjoy good chances in such a position，especially if there are open lines for his pieces，and they can be brought into the attack with gain of tempi．

## 16 䙾xg6！

Due to the pin against his h8－rook，Black must surrender the e－pawn．

16．．．fxg6 17 䓃xe6＋名f7（ $D$ ）
 tery，when $18 \ldots$ ．．．$\times \mathrm{xg} 2$ attempts to deflect the queen，but White wins in various ways． 19
置xd6\＃is the line that I planned，but easier and better is 19 登 $\mathrm{d} 1+$ 皃c8 20 登e8\＃．

17．．．皃f8 18 寞h6＋皃f7 19 宸e5（powerful centralization！）19．．．w w 20 总el and Black is helpless against the threats of 21 宸g7\＃and 21宸xc5．


18 㗀 5 苟he8
After 18．．．富g8 19 真e3！寞xe3 there comes the zwischenzug 20 䍖 7 with mate．


the move that I foresaw，and quite sufficient of course，but the computer finds a forced mate：


管b5\＃．

18．．．曾d8（D）was the best defence，and it took me some time to calculate the most precise continuation．


White needs to destroy the defender of the dark squares by 19 灵xc5！家xe6 and then to pro－ ceed with an attack based on opposite－coloured
宴c8 23 憎e5．Black must now surrender his queen by 23．．．卛xe7（worse is 23．．．卛d8 24

 White with a material gain of two pawns while still attacking．




## 1－0

All my pieces take part in the execution of Black＇s king．Black is mated after 24．．． 25粕h3＋

At the board I saw about $90 \%$ of the lines that I have included in the annotations．Do not be scared，or think that this is beyond your abil－ ities：the lines were forced and involved a lot of natural and logical moves．With enough prac－ tice and concentration you will also be able to calculate long forcing lines：it is a skill that can be learnt，as long as you practice actually doing it，such as in the exercises provided in each chapter of this book．

We now take a closer look at how to recognize when a destructive sacrifice might be possible． Our searching strategy could be as follows：

1．Which pieces are under attack？
2．Find the defenders of all the pieces that are under attack．

3．Can you capture the defender？
Let＇s see how this works in practice：


Vaznonis－Sakalauskas
Lithuanian Ch，Kaunas 2008

Question 1：Both queens are under attack． White＇s kingside is under heavy pressure，espe－ cially the knight on g 3 ．

Question 2：The white queen is defended by the rook，while the g3－knight is defended by the pawns on f 2 and h 2 ．

Black has concentrated his troops on the kingside，and asking the first two questions brings us to the conclusion that White＇s only defender is the knight on g 3 ．The answer to question 3 is a resounding＇yes＇：

## 26．．． $\begin{aligned} & \text { U } \\ & \text { xg } 3+!\end{aligned}$

The f2－pawn is pinned，and thus useless for defence，while the capture with the other pawn opens the h－file：

27 hxg3 ${ }^{\text {玉̈h }} \mathrm{h}$（\＃（ $0-1$ ）

The next example is somewhat similar to the previous one．The solution is similar as well－ annihilation of Black＇s only defender：


Filippov－Muzammil
Mumbai 2008

## 28 Exc6！bxc6

There is a bonus：not only has Black＇s best defender been removed，but the b－file is also opened．

29 皆d3 a5 30 芭b3＋1－0
In general，removing important defenders often does also open lines for our pieces．


Oral－Kantorik<br>Slovakian Team Ch 2000

White now physically removes two impor－ tant defenders，while opening a file for his rook， and a diagonal for the bishop：

If we find a clear answer to the question as to which piece is the most important defender，the rest will often be easy：


Zeynelabidin－Abello
French Junior Ch 1999

Black＇s position is held together by his dark－ squared bishop．Seek and destroy！
包 $\mathbf{x b} 3+28$ axb3 1－0

In practice the＇seek and destroy＇principle is harder to achieve when the enemy king is hid－ ing behind its pawn－cover．But then additional sacrifices might help：


R．Griffiths－Bokros
European Clubs Cup，Antalya 2007

White＇s bishop protects the b2－square，but there is a way to destroy it：

If 290 c 4 to defend the b2－pawn with his ma－ jor pieces，Black can bring another piece into the attack with decisive effect： $29 \ldots$ ．．． B d5！－＋．



We usually sacrifice material to open up the position of our opponent＇s king．


Boudre－Prié<br>Chamalières 2007

Here Prié could not stand the temptation， took a pawn with check by 20 ．．．${ }^{\mathbf{W}} \mathrm{yg} 5+$ and eventually won after a long fight．Later he found a clear－cut solution based on destroying White＇s most important defender：

## 20．．．葛xd5！！

Enemy number one off the board！

## 21 息xd5

Now Black brings in his reserves with gain of tempo：

21．．． E d8！ 22 置 b 3 蔦d2
Look how desperate White＇s pieces are！Due to the pin he cannot move．



## 24．．．．${ }^{\text {s }}$ h5！

The last piece joins the fray and White is helpless．



Black wins．Simple chess，is it not？！
The idea of removing the defender can also be used to gain material．Most players tend to
keep their pieces guarding one another when－ ever possible，but this may prove insufficient to keep them safe．


Bacrot－Rausis
European Union Ch，Liverpool 2008

Here is a simple case：Black＇s bishop is pro－ tecting his knight，but we can easily remove it at the price of an exchange．

35 晢xf21－0
White emerges with two minor pieces for a rook．

## Exercises



Demolish the last defender of the king！


Black has one active piece...


Black has sent too many of his troops to attack the kingside.


Three in a row.

Note the importance of a diagonal.


The fianchetto has weakened Black's dark squares.

Pawns in front of the king are his best shield.

## 11 The Power of the Pawn

The pawn is the least powerful piece on the chessboard，but since there are eight of them in each army，these modest footsoldiers define the character of the fight．Pawn－chains provide the strategic outline of the struggle，and the quality of the pawn－cover enjoyed by each king is a major tactical factor．Pawns are great defenders when they remain united and intact on their starting positions，especially as their choice of moving one or two squares gives them extra possibilities if they come under attack．

Pawns can also be used in an attack，as their small value means they can be sacrificed to open lines or force weaknesses without this constituting a major loss of attacking firepower． They can also act as advanced outposts，like thorns in the flesh of your enemy，staking out territory and supporting possible sallies by the more powerful pieces．

But every pawn has a special gift：whenever it reaches the final rank it can turn into a new piece，much stronger than before．It is this spe－ cial power on which we shall focus in this chap－ ter．We should also note that one must always think carefully before rejecting a pawn sacri－ fice；it is remarkable how often it happens that a pawn which has been spurned goes on later to wreak havoc with its further advance towards promotion．

I personally witnessed the following game in which the power of a pawn duo was demon－ strated．

## Khalifman－Ermenkov <br> Burgas 1994






Black attempts a simplifying combination to free his position．

17 莫xa6 ©xa6 18 荎xa6（ $D$ ）


## 18．．．b5 19 © $x$ 55 黑xb5 20 axb5

Having sacrificed two pawns to close off the white queen＇s road back home，Ermenkov was expecting that the perpetual attack on the queen would assure him a draw．However，there was a surprise in store for him．
弟 $\mathbf{c 8}(D)$


After prolonged thought，Khalifman intu－ itively sacrificed his queen．Obviously he could not calculate all the possible lines here，but he felt that his passed pawns supported by his pieces should net him the full point．

## 24 b4！！芭xc6 25 dxc6

White has a rook and a passed pawn duo in return for the queen．His plan should be to as－ sure promotion for at least one of them．Like in a game of curling，White＇s pieces must now clear the road for the stones（pawns）．

## 25．．．e6

Black had at his disposal two other attempts to blockade the white pawns．

Stohl gave simply 25 ．．．cxb4 26 b 6 as winning for White，but while this assessment seems to be correct，the line should be analysed further： 26．．．．Wercs！（Black should block the pawns at any



Black has created a solid defensive set－up， but White needs just one more open file to break it： 29 c 4 ！血f8 30 皆d1 e6 31 c 5 ！dxc5 32


 +- ．White doesn＇t need to hurry；芭c1 is inevi－ table．

Another attempt to blockade the pawns starts with 25 ．．．Wbe The following instructive line is also given by Stohl： 26 c 4 ！是 $\mathrm{a} 8(\mathrm{D})$ ．


Now take care，as the path for the stones must be cleared carefully： 27 罢al！（an impor－ tant move：White must penetrate via the open file；in addition，he swaps one of the defenders）


 b7 promoting．

26 臮ed！
White can also play 26 bxc5，but after $26 \ldots \mathrm{~d} 5$ he will have to contend with Black＇s ideas of ．．．d4．

## 26．．．嵦b8

 27 bxc5 dxc5 28 b6 㟤xe4 29 自xc5＋－．

27 bxc5 d5 28 exd5 exd5 29 苞xd5 山e8 30



## $1-0$

Black is a whole queen up，but has no de－ fence．

Oddly enough，some years later I applied the same winning idea，of creating two connected passed pawns，in the Bulgarian Championship：


Bojkov－V．Alexandrov
Bulgarian Ch，Dupnitsa 1998

## 

 28 』ecl the pawns are supported by all White＇s remaining pieces，and are obviously impossible
 31 c7（D）could be a pretty finish：





## 31 c8蒌＋

White has promoted one of the pawns，while keeping the other alive．



White is already an exchange ahead，but the second passed pawn also deserves promotion． As we said before，the road in front of the pawn should be cleared．

## 33 嵝xb8！1－0

Black decided to call it a day due to $33 \ldots$ ．．${ }^{\text {Wixb }}$ xb


As we have already seen，it can cost a great deal of material to neutralize a well－supported passed pawn．The following example is even more drastic：


Bojkov－Bayram
Izmir 2002
Unfortunately，not all of my experiences with passed－pawn duos are pleasant．In this game I had a lesson－luckily，for free．I had just ex－ changed knights on d 5 ，and was highly optimis－ tic：I am a pawn ahead，and a second one is coming on the next move．I did not consider se－ riously the knight sacrifice，but this was exactly what my opponent did！

22．．．e4！！
Now White is in danger too！

## 

官e4？Following a passive plan of exchanging rooks that leaves my back rank weak．White should seek counterplay with 26 领33！，the main point being 26．．．昌e7 27 崖d4 with complications．
卤 e 30 c 7

Having played brilliantly to achieve a won game，Black now blundered in time－trouble：

30．．．白h7？？
Instead he could have created a true master－ piece by letting me promote： 30 ．．．．खxe4！！ 31


An amazing position！Black＇s pawn duo will cost White both his queens．We already know the method；the road should be cleared：

 35 宵f $2 \mathrm{~d} 2-+$ and there is nothing more for me to do than congratulate my opponent on his ex－ cellent play．
$30 \ldots$ ．．．．．g 7 ？！is also better than the move played，and should lead to a draw．

In the game Black managed to win only one queen for his mighty passed pawns，while I made the maximum of my advanced pawn．


 39．．．．

果e6 1－0

An important general principle is that the power of the pawns increases in the end－ game．If there are no other pieces on the board， even a single pawn can become a queen and win the game．As a general rule，two connected passed pawns on the sixth rank overpower a rook if no other pieces can intervene．


Bojkov－Murrey
French Team Ch，Niort 2007

I knew that my position was lost，and that I could only hope for a perpetual check some－ how．But when we reached this position，I sud－ denly realized that the power of the pawn duo gave Black the opportunity to liquidate to a won endgame．My experienced opponent also real－ ized this：

## 48．．．．害d4！

The best practical decision．Murrey does not give me any chances for random combinations and blocks the open d－file．

## 49 妴 1

After this move I lost silently，but the line 49

 a4 54 聯 b 7 管c 4 and a pawn marches through．





A single passed pawn generally needs more piece support if it is to make its way to promo－ tion past hostile forces．The supporting pieces may clear the way for the pawn by using various tactical ideas that we have seen in earlier chap－ ters．Particularly common themes in this respect are removing the defender and deflection：


Garcia Palermo－Rowson
Palau 2008
Black＇s pawns are blockaded，but Black finds a way to set them in motion：

51．．．b3＋！
White must capture with the king，since his knight is pinned．

52 档xb3c2
Black soon won．

Here is an example of multiple deflections combined with a mating threat：


## C．Saavedra－Suri <br> Guines 2001

## 愘xh1 gxf $20-1$



Khenkin－Postny
Maalot－Tarshiha 2008

A decoy helps White to promote his pawn：
53 d8崖＋！©xd8 54 e7 1－0
Like in all combinations，time is important when we promote our pawns．Sometimes our own pieces are in the way of our pawns，and we need to find ways to get rid of them with tempo （see following diagram）．

1 邁xf 7 ！
White first clears the road for the passed pawn．

## 1．．．筫 $x h 6+$





Jasny－Suchomel<br>Czech Republic 2004

## 2 gxh6 d1 敕

Now the bishop is in the pawn＇s way．It steps aside while also cutting off the black rook＇s protection of the back rank：

3 置 e 8 ！！皃g8



So far we have only seen examples of the suc－ cessful promotion of passed pawns．But we have not seen how these pawns are created．Our most faithful friend in this endeavour is a method called breakthrough：


White creates a passed pawn with a simple exchange：

40 应xb5 cxb5 41 c6 1－0
The lone passed pawn can be stopped by the king by playing 41 ．．．舁e 8 ，but the main problem comes from the other side： 42 g 5 ！is a standard
breakthrough，clearing the way for the h－pawn． After $42 \ldots$ hxg 543 h 6 ，Black＇s king is incapa－ ble of stopping two passed pawns that are so far apart，while the knight on a4 is too far away to have any impact on events．

When the passed pawn is solidly blockaded by the opponent＇s king，it may be worth major sacrifices to bring the pawn to a different file， especially as this will tend to gain time with a discovered check in cases where the pawn is supported from behind．


## Sada－Y．Rodriguez

Cuba 2000

White first cleared a path for his queen to support the passed pawn：

1 e5！䙾xe5
1．．．dxe5 2 管xe6！＋
2 完xe6！fxe6 3 崖xg6＋象h8（D）


Now the pawn can be switched to a different file．This costs a whole queen，but the invest－ ment is recouped with a lot of interest：



Now let＇s take a look at a case where several threats were combined：


Kotanjian－Zysk
Athens 2006

## 

Black rejected the mass exchanges of the
苞xg8＋综h7 because White promotes and wins by 45 b8 wiw．Unfortunately for him，the move 42邑g8＋also cleared a line for the queen：

## 

43．．． $0 x \mathrm{xg} 644 \mathrm{fxg} 6 \#$ ．
In some special cases the pawn can trans－ form into a piece other than the queen－which is called an underpromotion．The most com－ mon case by far is underpromotion to a knight， as this may mean that the promotion comes with check，or creates a knight fork．


Dubinsky－Lapshun
New York 2000

White＇s position looks dubious but he finds a good move：

1 E．c1！！
1 gg 1 ？d4 is better for Black．
Now it is Black＇s turn to make a crucial deci－ sion and he passes the test：

1．．．a1分！

2 关h1！©b3＋3孚e2 $1 / 2-1 / 2$
Underpromotion to a rook or bishop is very uncommon in practice，since these pieces have no additional powers compared to a queen． Therefore the only reason to choose a bishop or rook is to avoid stalemate ideas，or else to stale－ mate oneself，and these themes are normally re－ stricted to composed positions．


## E．Pogosiants

Shakhmaty v SSSR， 1981
White first blocks in all of Black＇s pieces：
1 苗 $\mathrm{g} 5+$ ！
Not 1 f8震？ g 5 ！＝（1．．．f5＋？ 2 dif4 g5＋ 3


1．．．fxg5（D）


White must now be careful，since he has left Black with very few legal moves．

2 f8를（D）
This underpromotion is the only way to win． 2 f8 曾？is only enough for a draw after 2．．．霓g8 3 菐xg8 stalemate．



## Exercises



Passed pawns must be pushed！


Time is money．


Support the modest footsoldier.


Find a way for Black to win. Greed will be punished!


Passed pawns don't have to be promoted in order to be useful.


The theme here is breakthrough.


Pawn power increases into the...?


Pawns have a lust to expand, as Nimzowitsch reminded us.

## 12 Back－Rank Mate

In most chess games it is a good idea to castle early in the game．This is because we need to bring our rooks harmoniously into the game and find a safe haven for our king behind a strong pawn－shield．We generally avoid mov－ ing the pawns in front of the king so as not to create weaknesses．If we advance the rook＇s pawn，then this can invite a sacrifice，while moving the knight＇s pawn can leave us open to an invasion on the complex of squares this move weakens．Meanwhile，advancing the bishop＇s pawn leaves the king exposed to checks on the diagonal，and overall loosens our position．

However，sometimes the lack of luft－an es－ cape－hatch for the king－might allow another evil：a mate on the bank rank．If we spot that our opponent＇s king does not have any escape－ squares on its second rank，we should be alert to ideas by which we might mate him on his back rank with a queen or a rook（or a promot－ ing pawn）．Since we are dealing with mate here， a very large sacrifice may be justified to bring this about by removing defenders or deflecting them．Before moving on to specific examples， we should note that a weak back rank often plays a role in chess strategy．Sometimes the battle for the centre hinges upon ideas that are based on an exploitation of a back－rank weak－ ness at the end of a lengthy tactical sequence．In a battle arising from a well－played opening， neither side can necessarily afford to spend a tempo giving their king a flight－square，so this shouldn＇t be looked upon as just a fluke，but rather as an organic feature of the chessboard struggle．

In the following diagram，Black＇s king has no flight－squares on its second rank．The d8－ rook protects the back rank，but this piece must also protect its colleague on d 5 ．Thus the rook is overloaded，and we immediately see the solu－ tion：

## 25 荘 $x d 5!1-0$

 27 登xd8\＃．


Timoshenko－C．Foisor
Cappelle la Grande 2008

In the next position，Black＇s king again lacks luft，which White exploits by a deflection．


C．Bauer－Renet
French Ch，Aix－les－Bains 2007

White＇s doubled rooks on the d－file are obvi－ ously well－placed，but his most powerful piece， his queen，appears to be out of the game．It would be nice if we could use it to help in the at－ tack．．．

## 28 黉b7！1－0

White exploits the fact that the defender is overloaded： 28 ．．．峟f8 loses a piece after 29



The next example is far from obvious．If you spend a lot of time tackling tactical exercises， then you start to find it easier and easier to spot possibilities like this．Hint：consider which are the critical squares on the back rank．


Khmelnitsky－Kabatiansky USSR 1989

The first precondition is met：Black＇s king has no flight－squares．But how on earth can we possibly exploit this fact？！The rook on c8（first critical square）is well protected，and our rook is blocked by no fewer than three pieces on its way to the e8－square（second critical square）． Still，knowing that the back－rank defenders must be destroyed or deflected，we might try the fol－ lowing：

## 1 ©f5！1－0

The black knight must defend the rook，so 1 ．．．exf5 is forced，but now we almost have ac－ cess to the back rank for our rook．We need to hit the first critical square with 2 凿xc8＋！ $0 \times 18$ and enjoy the second one by 3 㗊e8\＃．

Controlling a critical square can have a deci－ sive importance，and often it is not just a simple matter of counting how many times each side is covering a critical square．We also need to con－ sider potential attacks and X－rays，and calcu－ late the concrete variations with care．

In the following diagram，Black has an ex－ cellent concentration of forces on the c－file：the queen is also eyeing $c 1$ ．This is clearly a critical square，since if Black could put a queen or rook on this square it will be mate．However，it looks like the knight is well protected on c6（attacked twice but defended three times）and that access to White＇s back rank is therefore firmly closed


San Segundo－Morović<br>Spanish Team Ch，Cala Galdana 1994

off．However，it is not the number of attacks on c6 that is decisive here．

Let us see what will happen if we destroy the knight．We immediately see that taking back with the queen loses material（two rooks for a queen and a knight）．But what if he takes back with the rook？

White will win an exchange，but in the pro－ cess will lose control over the truly critical square， cl ．He is only defending it once，while Black is hitting it twice－directly from the queen from g5，and a second one from the X－ raying c8－rook．

## 24．．．茑xc6！0－1

 terial，while the main idea is 25 苞xc6 㟶xc1＋！


We should also calculate if our opponent can cover the check on the critical square with some of his pieces．


V．Dimitrov－Gligorić
Pozarevac 1995

The critical square here is e8．It is well pro－ tected by a knight and a rook．But we can easily remove the knight：

## 

Black has two options．After 35．．．苼xd6 he can no longer cover his king： 36 苞e8＋䒤xe8 37
邑e8＋篇xe8（36．．．紧f8 loses material after the simple 37 总xf8＋） 37 we8＋and now Black can cover his king by $37 . . .{ }_{\text {Wif }} \mathrm{f} 8$ but this should not worry us，since White wins in two ways：di－ rectly with 38 寞xf7＋禺h8 39 罾xf8\＃or prosai－ cally by 38 宸xc6．

Escape－squares might be covered by our pieces：


White would like to destroy the rook on f 8 and deliver mate on the bank rank．However， Black will then have an escape－route via e7． This window should be slammed shut！

## 25 ©5！1－0

Simultaneously attacking the rook and tak－ ing away the important escape－square on e7． Black resigned due to 25 ．．．嘪xf5 26 凿xf8＋
皆d8\＃．

A check on the bank rank does not always promise mate，especially when our opponent can interpose and open an escape－square for his king．But this rescue effort may cost significant material（see following diagram）．

23 兹xd7！1－0
 to escape the back－rank mate，but after 25 光xf8＋


Rublevsky－Zviagintsev
Russian Team Ch，Dagomys 2008

商g726 rook and two bishops for the queen．One im－ portant detail is that the counterattack against White＇s own back rank is harmless： 26 ．．．옵h6


We have so far been discussing back－rank mates by rooks and queens．But there is a third piece that can help us exploit a weak back rank －a pawn．


M．Gurevich－Pavasović
European Ch，Plovdiv 2008
Black＇s position looks critical but it is his move and he is a piece ahead，and has a power－ ful passed pawn．Additionally，White＇s king is in danger of a back－rank mate．For the moment the critical d 1 －square is covered，but this will not last long：

34．．．
Black destroys the main defender of the back rank－the rook．


And now comes the finest hour of the brave infantryman．

36．．．b2！0－1
White is either mated after 37 誛xa4 bl 㟶＋
楼al，when Black promotes a second pawn．

There are plenty of typical mating pattern that are closely related to the back－rank mate：


Vasiukov－J．Howell
Yaroslavl 1990
The d4－bishop is controlling the h 8 －and g 7 － squares，which makes Black＇s king vulnerable on the back rank．

21 炭xh7＋！1－0
 24 犖h8\＃．

A vulnerable back rank can be combined with other tactical ideas：


S．Bjerke－C．Andersson
Oslo 2008
28 余h6！

White threatens mate，while simultaneously cutting off the black king＇s escape－route．

There follows 29．．．㟶xf6 30 号e8\＃or 29 ．．．．d4 30 皆 $x d 4$ ．

Mates on the a－and h －files may also be con－ sidered back－rank mates．You just need to ro－ tate your view by 90 degrees．


I．Marks－H．Mortensen
Gibraltar 2008
Black first chases his enemy into the corner．
20．．．断e3＋！ 21 字h1
Then he deflects his only protection on the h －file．

21．．． $0 \mathrm{~g} 3+$ ！ 22 hxg 3
And finally he brings in decisive reinforce－ ments：

22．．．． $\mathbf{E}$ 6 0－1

## Exercises



A knight fork will help you mate on the back rank．


Black has just played 23...a6-a5. Is this move positionally sound, and good for Black, or is it a terrible blunder?


Black's bank rank is hopelessly weak...


You are about to discover a typical mating pattern all by yourself!


The critical squares here are cl and ...?


35 迤h7\# and 35 曹g6+ are White's threats. Is it time for Black to resign?


Black's bishop looks locked in forever and White has enough compensation for his pawn weaknesses. True or false?


White had played excellently, winning an exchange. However, his last move was a terrible blunder, which Black punished instantly. Can you spot what was coming?

## 13 Stalemate

Sometimes things go wrong and we find our－ selves in a difficult position．In this situation one should never give up hope and should fight to the very end．Chess is a sport like many others，and resourcefulness and fighting spirit might be well rewarded．In this chapter and the next，we look at some tactical methods that can be used to save difficult positions．

Stalemate is one of the more cunning ways to achieve a draw．It is one of the little quirks of chess that the game is drawn if a player has no legal moves and his king is not under attack，no matter how large his opponent＇s material ad－ vantage might be；there is no reason why we should not seek to take advantage of this．It is important to understand that stalemate ideas don＇t just happen by accident：we should be thinking about immobilizing our pawns，and be looking for ways to force the opponent to take any remaining pieces．We should also note that many players with a large advantage fail to think about their opponent＇s stalemate ideas until it is too late．．．


Bojkov－Borisek
European Team Ch，Gothenburg 2005

The scoring in this event was based on match points and after the other three games finished peacefully，my game was left to de－ cide the match．I had played very badly in the middlegame and my opponent was gradually
increasing his advantage．A move ago he had sacrificed his queen to penetrate onto my first rank，and now threatens an unstoppable mate． With less than a minute I had to find some－ thing，and fortunately I spotted that my king lacks moves．The decision：I need to get rid of all my unnecessary pieces！

67 0xg5
First the minor one that he could easily ne－ glect to take if I left it until last．

67．．．fxg5
Not，of course，67．．．홉h6？ 68 0xe4．

He has to step onto the f－file；otherwise I will
苞 $\mathrm{c} 6+$ ．


## 70 登 $f 8+$ ！

The time for a second sacrifice has come！ 70．．．
After 70．．． now 72 畐f7＋or 72 总xcl，both based on the same stalemate ideas） 71 ．．．${ }^{6} \mathrm{~d} 6$ ？（not a good way to avoid the draw，which Black can settle for by 71 ．．．宴xf7 or $71 \ldots$ 高e6）White can insist on a repetition by 72 㫜f6＋（when $72 \ldots$ ．．．．． 5 ？ fails to 73 蒀f1），but after 72 置 1 ！he is probably winning（ $72 \ldots$ ．．． cl 73 笽f6＋）．

## 71 嵩f1＋！

The only move，but good enough．It is also a double attack with my undefended queen． 71㬐 $\mathrm{f} 3+$ ？allows the bishop to move，when I will
have an additional pawn move：71．．．置xf3 72 e4苞h1\＃． 71 Uf2＋？fails to $71 . .$.

71．．．${ }^{\text {an }}$ xf1 $1 / 2-1 / 2$
Stalemate！
The most important condition before you perform a stalemate idea is to have your king in a＇safety box＇．This means a place from where it can neither move，nor be checked．In the previ－ ous case（and the next），this is already the case－ the king has no squares to move to．Then you must take care of your pawns－are they block－ aded，or can they move？Unlike a rook or espe－ cially a queen，pawns are hard to sacrifice in such a way that the opponent is forced to take them．


## Ormos－Betotsky

Budapest 1951

Here Black＇s pawns are blocked，so he just needs to sacrifice his remaining pieces in a way that doesn＇t lift the stalemate．The best order is usually minor pieces first，major pieces last． But the vital thing is to sacrifice them in a way that doesn＇t allow any of them to be ignored，so be sure，as always，to analyse carefully．

## 1．．．

Black sacrifices his rook first，since he is sure that his knight must be taken on the next move．
 Stalemate！

If the king is not already stalemated，the ＇safety box＇must be constructed．Some cun－ ning may be required for this，and a consider－ ation of what moves the opponent needs to play if he is to make progress．Once this is achieved， the standard task of sacrificing the remaining
army is all that stands between you and a very satisfying half－point．


Navara－Svidler
FIDE Grand Prix，Sochi 2008

43 觡h4
White keeps his king active．

## 43．．．b3 44 篤b6 g6

It is hard to gain ground otherwise，since 44．．．皃g8 45 苞b7 keeps the king cut off from the action．



## 48 h 3 ！

Suddenly everything is ready for a stale－ mate－the white king has created its own safety box．

If we can＇t sacrifice all our pieces to force an actual stalemate，we can in some cases never－ theless use stalemate ideas to save a difficult position．In the situation called the rampant rook，a rook repeatedly sacrifices itself，giving the opponent a choice between stalemate or perpetual check．


Aronian－Gelfand Amber Blindfold，Nice 2008

This is an example of this most famous of stalemate suicide ideas．

49．．．h5！
First Black exhausts all his pawn moves．



## 

 fering the sacrifice of his rampant rook．These sacrifices take place on doubly－attacked squares， but this does not matter，as White has no way to capture the rook that avoids the draw：after

 mate．

Other pieces may also become rampant under certain circumstances，but a rook is the most common．Normally a＇rampant queen＇will need to be taken quite soon，while the minor pieces can only give a perpetual sacrifice when there is some help from the structure or other pieces．

Rook endgames feature a lot of stalemate ideas．You just need to be aware of them．


Navara－Grishchuk<br>FIDE Grand Prix，Baku 2008

Black is a solid pawn up，and if everything proceeds normally should have every chance to win．This is why it is well worth White＇s while playing for a trap．

63 苞 d 4 ？
With this innocent－looking move，Navara sets a devilish trap．

## 63．．．巴 ${ }^{\text {en }}$ ！

Black is alert and sidesteps it．In event of
 looks like Black should win easily．


However，there now follows 66 芭xg4＋！fxg4 with a typical stalemate pattern for rook end－ games．Declining the sacrifice is no use，as the


## 64 等d8 発 $2+$

Grishchuk went on to win on move 86，but your opponent might not be that alert．In any case，setting a trap in a lost position can only in－ crease one＇s chances for a draw．

Stalemate is most common when the king is near the corners or edges of the board，where it
has fewer squares to move to. However, you should not assume that mid-board stalemates are impossible:

A. Khachikov

Shakhmaty (Riga), 1973



Stalemate.

## Exercises



Choose between 58 寫xe3 and 58 邑 $7+$


Should White take the pawn?


White's king is already in a safety box. What is next?

How should the game end?


White's bishop is the 'right' one for his rook's pawn, and it seems that Black cannot build a fortress. Time to resign?


Discover a safety box.


White will inevitably lose his rook. Is this the end of the story?

## 14 Perpetual Check and Fortresses

## Perpetual Check and Perpetual Attack

Another useful method for saving a draw is threefold repetition of position．When this is forced by chasing the king，we call it perpetual check．This can occur either because the king cannot avoid the checks at all，or because avoid－ ing them leads to unpleasant consequences．The king is not the only piece that can be disturbed for eternity；this can happen to any other piece， such as a queen that has strayed too far into en－ emy territory．In that case we speak about per－ petual attack，or a positional draw．

Perpetual check can be the logical result of an attack on the king in an equal position，but it is also a useful idea for saving a dubious or lost position：


Conquest－Edouard European Union Ch，Liverpool 2008

White＇s position looks dreadful：his pieces seem uncoordinated，while Black already has serious threats against the white king，including 38．．． e xg $3+$ ．However，Conquest found a way to force a perpetual：

## 38 真 2 ！

The only way－White deflects Black＇s queen from its defence of the f5－pawn．White would
lose material after 38 峟e8？e3 39 fxe3 宸xe3＋
 too late for a perpetual： 42 蒌e7＋皃g6 43 㟶e6＋
 wins．

## 

By now White has a choice： 40 首d7＋ $0 x d 7$

 another way to force a draw．

40．．． 0 c 6
After 40．．． 9 3＋White only needs to avoid one final trap．After 41 舁h1 挡a2 42 E゙c7＋



 44 䠓 $\mathrm{d} 7+{ }^{2} \mathrm{~g}$ g

44．．．包f6 45 㗀d6＋doesn＇t change anything．
45 唇e6＋宵h7 $1 / 2-1 / 2$


Valdes－H．Gonzalez
Cuba 2001

This example is more complicated．It looks as if Black is facing inevitable mate．The queen and bishop are lined up on the long diagonal， and if $1 .$. 㟶g $4+$ White can simply answer 2 ff 2 and the checks are over．If Black wants to do something，he must first disrupt the threat against his king．

## 1．．．皿e5！

Deflection and interference．This subtle move breaks White＇s perfect coordination．

## 2 fxe5

White sacrifices his queen，but this is only sufficient for a draw．Other moves：
a） 2 定xe5 allows an immediate perpetual

b） 2 蜝c6 leads to a drawn rook endgame af－

c）White＇s best practical chance is 2 㟶xa6！？

 Exe3 7 䩪f2（ 7 \＃ct should also end peacefully
 but this is a draw．

## 

3 实h1 曹e4＋＝

## 

Black has won the white queen thanks to the pin，but is still the weaker side．Therefore he forces a draw：



9．．．高 $2+1 / 2-1 / 2$
It is naturally possible to use several saving ideas together：


Otero－Rivera
Cuba 2002

White needs to sacrifice something or throw in the towel：

1 鼻xf4！

 f 3 ，which is hopeless for White，while 1 爵 $8+$ ？
gage 2 夏xf4 gives Black the additional option 2．．．㭻g7，which，in fact，wins．

膤xe7＋

4 晋 $5+(D)$


## 4．．．むg7

In case of 4 ．．．tere White gives perpetual check on the light squares－the opposite colour



After the text－move，it looks as if White＇s de－ fensive resources are exhausted．However，he has one final idea：

Since 5．．． $\mathbf{e} \times \mathrm{x} 5$ is stalemate！

The queen is such a powerful piece that in many cases it can deliver perpetual check all on its own，without the support of any other pieces． But other pieces can sometimes perform the same feat with only a little assistance：


## G．Zakhodiakin

Shakhmaty v SSSR， 1981

## 1 \＆ d 6

Black will queen，but White saves himself with a remarkably simple and effective con－ struction：

1 ．．．e2 2 导 7 7
 lose the queen to a fork．

With a draw．
A rook and a knight may also create a draw－ ing mechanism if they are well coordinated． This was well explained by Nimzowitsch：

W


A．Nimzowitsch（version）
Rigaer Nachrichten， 1923

## 

1．．．身c6 5 刍d7 $=$ ．

## 

Now that Black has promoted，White must act with checks．

## 4 苞 $\mathrm{b} 4+$ 自a5

Now the classical drawing mechanism is created．The excellent position of White＇s king helps him use the same motifs on the c－file：
啲c8？？ 8 芭b8\＃．

## 

Remember this pattern．It may help you save a lot of points．I myself saved half a point by using the mechanism in a game against GM Atanas Kolev（La Roda rapid 2001）．

Sometimes there is nothing objectively better than taking a draw by perpetual check．But if we have the draw＇in hand＇，so to speak，then there is no harm in trying a final winning chance．If the
opponent sees through the idea，then so be it，we must then take the draw．


Lopez Martinez－G．Guseinov
European Ch，Warsaw 2005
The position is double－edged and Black de－ fends excellently：

24．．．．$\times x$ 2！
 27 挡g5 with the idea 28 皆xh7＋

25 的xa2
White could have forced a perpetual by 25
糖f6＋，but he takes his chance．
 （1） 2 ！？（ $D$ ）

28 g $8+$ is perpetual again，but why not give our opponent a chance to go wrong？


## 28．．．䠊xa6！

Guseinov is alert．The innocuous－looking bishop on a6 was heavily laced with poison：
断5 $5+\frac{y}{b} h 8$ and now White triumphs using the blocking／deflection idea 32 要g7＋！全xg7（or

 $1 / 2-1 / 2$

Having avoided the trap，Black had earned his half－point．

## Fortresses and Insufficient Material

Another important defensive theme is liquida－ tion to a position where one can easily defend by passive means despite a large material disad－ vantage．There are two distinct cases：＇fortress＇ positions，where the opponent cannot improve his position due to a blockade or other posi－ tional factors，and the simpler case of the oppo－ nent being left without sufficient material to force checkmate．


Galojan－Tsiganova<br>European Women＇s Ch，Plovdiv 2008

Pawn exchanges can be very effective in endgames．Pawns may become queens，so they are especially dangerous and should sometimes be destroyed even at the cost of a piece．In the diagram，the lazy option for Black would be to retreat her knight，but this would most probably lead to defeat（White has two connected，well－ advanced and well－supported passed pawns）．It is far better to play actively，and seize the op－ portunity to destroy White＇s pawns．

## 63．．． $0 x 4$ ！

A subtle move．Worse is $63 . .0 x g 5 ?!64$ fxg5 皃g6 65 兽d1．This will lead to the rook vs rook＋bishop ending，which in theory is drawn with precise defence，but Black will at least need to suffer for fifty more moves，being very
careful the whole time to avoid blundering into one of the many lost positions．The text－move has the idea of exchanging rooks too．
家g6 ${ }^{1 / 2-1 / 2}$

White has a bishop more，but the pawns have left the board．

There are many possible fortresses in our game，but I would like to show you one that is not very common．


Bulgarian Team Ch，Sunny Beach 2007

White was aiming for this position，and hoped to exchange all the pieces after 54 号a7 （followed by 55 真d5）．However，when this po－ sition actually arose，he realized what Black had in store for him： $\mathbf{5 4} \ldots$ ．．是xe4！！with the idea 55 总xc7 皃xc7 56 宴xe4 and Black＇s king goes
昌d6 皙e8（ $D$ ）。


White has an extra bishop，but cannot break the fortress．Black simply plays ．．．${ }^{6} f 8$－e8－f8， and holds the draw．

In the game he proceeded with 54 胃 2 莤xe4， but without his extra pawn could not make progress and the game was later drawn．

Some ways in which games can be saved are truly miraculous，and it is no surprise that for－ tresses and positional draws are very popular amongst endgame study composers．


## G．Zakhodiakin

Shakhmaty v SSSR， 1982
White is an exchange up，but his rook is im－ potent to stop the black h－pawn，which will clearly promote well before White＇s g－pawn． Normal means will not suffice to save White．

## 1 g6 h2 2 畳h4！

 -+ ．The text－move appears only to delay the $h-$ pawn＇s promotion by one move，but there is a cunning point behind luring the bishop to h 4 ．

The king must move to precisely this square， where neither black piece can check it．


Black is a queen and bishop ahead，and is to move，but cannot avoid a draw．

## Exercises



If you have read the chapter carefully，this should be easy．


In the race to attack，and White is lagging far behind．It is time to find a safe option？


How can White annihilate Black＇s danger－ ous pawns？


White is a pawn down, and needs to hurry before his opponent consolidates.


A rook is also capable of glorious deeds.


Black is three pawns down, but is very active... ve...


Be very precise when giving perpetual check!


Black will queen, but two knights are not sufficient to give mate. So...

## Part 2: Advanced Tactics

The second part of the book features the most typical ways to attack a castled king. A king is well protected in its castled position, with a row of pawns in front and normally with some pieces close at hand (normally a rook and a knight, and often a bishop). However, there are also many possible plans for attacking this set-up. If you study these plans carefully, and assess at the board which one is most appropriate under the specific circumstances, you will often be able to carry out successful attacks.

The most sensitive points in the castled position are those which are only covered by the king, or perhaps only by one other piece. These points might be blown apart with the help of various sacrifices, or targeted by a variety of other attacking manoeuvres and mechanisms.

Never forget that we need to have a local superiority of forces if we want to succeed in our mating plans. And as always, control of the centre is important if we are to supply additional forces and prevent our opponent from bringing over defensive forces to guard the king. But most of all, we need to be quick, and to use every move efficiently and to gain time whenever possible.

We shall be taking a particularly close look at attacks with opposite-coloured bishops. While pure opposite-bishop endings tend to be drawish, in an attack and defence situation, the difference in the value of these minor pieces can prove decisive. The better bishop often wins since the attack can be conducted on the squares of its colour, on which its counterpart is impotent.

Open files are another key ingredient. Rooks are the only pieces that do not need to be centralized to show their full potential; all they need are open files. These chess highways provide good communication between the attacking forces, and assure the success of many tactical operations.

Last, but not least - the trapping of pieces, both physical and virtual (i.e. the excluding of a piece) may also bring us the necessary superiority of forces. A piece that is shut out of play can be compared to a pinned, overloaded, or blocked piece. None of these pieces can act with their full potential, and so may become vulnerable and be lost themselves, or may cause other misfortunes thanks to their passivity.

In the last three chapters, strategy and tactics become merged into one intertwined whole, and this is very normal for such a complicated game as chess.

## 15 f7：Weak by Presumption

When we observe the initial position of a chess game，one thing inevitably makes an impres－ sion．There is one square that is protected only by the king，a square so vulnerable that even novices notice that it is possible to give mate on this square after just a few moves．We are of course talking about the f 7 －square ${ }^{1}$ ．

We shall consider several typical situations in which an attack against this fragile point may be feasible：

1）An explosive early sacrifice before cas－ tling．

2）After castling，with no rook on f 8 ．
3）After castling，with the f7－pawn protected by the rook．

4）Step－by－step attack against the weak f7－ square．

## Explosive early sacrifice before castling

As we have already noted， f 7 is the most vul－ nerable square in the initial position，so there is ample scope for early sacrifices on this square．Whole opening plans are based on an early sacrifice on f 7 ，such as the Petroff De－
 Dxf 7 ！？！，when for the sacrificed knight White earns two pawns，and a long－term attack based on the exposed position of the black king．This was seen，for instance，in the game Topalov－ Kramnik，Linares 1999．In general one of the best players in our time，Veselin Topalov is a great advocate of early sacrifices on $f 7$ ．Using the same method he managed to defeat his old adversary Kramnik in one of the best games of the last decade：

Topalov－Kramnik<br>Wijk aan Zee 2008

1 d 4 d 52 c 4 c 63 分 3 气f64 0 c 3 e 65 鼻g 5




## 12 有xf？？！

The second exclamation mark is for the courage to give up a piece against a world－ class player at such an early stage of the game． This was Ivan Cheparinov＇s deep novelty，pre－ pared in 2005 for possible use in the 2006 world championship match．White gets only one pawn for the piece，but develops a strong initiative against the opponent＇s king．Topalov went on to win a flashy game，and the reader can find annotations in many sources in case he is not already familiar with this game．

## Topalov－Anand <br> Sofia 2005





1 Or the f2－square in White＇s position．For ease of reference，we shall in our general discussions refer to the f7－square，but naturally the reader should not assume that White＇s f2－square is any safer against the ideas we shall present！

After 11．．．h6 both 12 Qxf7 and 12 exe6 blow Black＇s position apart in a similar way to the game continuation．
$11 \ldots 0-0$ was given by Topalov as safer，when White can reply $120-0-0$ with the idea 13 空d3．

12 d5 exd5 13 cxd5 h6（D）


## 14 0xf7！客xf7 150－0－0

White has a strong initiative against Black＇s king．He has at his disposal various threats， such as 16 en $5+$ and 16 d 6 followed by 鼻c4＋， and can use both his rooks in the attack．One very important feature of the position is that af－ ter the demolition of the black pawn on f7，a whole complex of light squares has become desperately weak．
 © 6
盆c4 underlines the light－square weaknesses in Black＇s camp．

## 19 㑒xb4 cxb4 20 鼻c4 b5

Black had other possible defences，such as $20 \ldots$ ．．． 21 Wg6，which will be met by 21 ．．．b5！．How－ ever，the evaluation of the position remains the same：White has a strong attack and any mis－ take from Black＇s side will be cruelly punished．

## 21 酋xb5 鼻e7？

And here it comes．Better was 21．．． meeting 22 gg6 with $22 \ldots \mathrm{~h} 5$ ！？Topalov pro－ posed 22 里c 4 or 22 dl in reply．

22．．．．亚xe6 23 dxe6＋홉g8 24 曾d1 0 d5 25全c4＋

## 23 発xe7＋？！

This was White＇s only flaw in his superb at－ tack．Although he nevertheless won later，we shall leave the game at this point，as it would
distract from the main focus of our discussion
息c4 would have led to an instant win，and is an ideal illustration of the ideas behind the assault on f 7 ．


Alsina Leal－Fluvia Poyatos<br>Barcelona 2008

The weakness of the light squares can also be highlighted by a sacrifice on a square other than f7．In this case White deflects the f7－pawn， and can destroy it later．

## 17 Og6！

This is practically the same idea as the sacri－ fice on $\mathrm{f7}$ ；White just captures the pawn in an unusual way．



As a result of the sacrifice，Black＇s king has had to stay in the centre under threats from all the white pieces．It is no wonder that it did not survive for too long．




## After castling，with no rook on $\mathbf{f 8}$

When Black castles kingside，his rook immedi－ ately covers the f7－pawn．However，for various reasons the rook may move from f8，possibly to contest an open file，or with some other strate－ gic aim in mind，such as freeing f8 for a knight or bishop．However well motivated this may be，it does leave f 7 highly sensitive once again， and various mating mechanisms may then work．

One typical idea is to play $\mathbf{6} \mathbf{8} \mathbf{8}+$ followed by the $0 x f 7$ sacrifice．The attacker first cuts off the king＇s way back to his safe squares $g 8$ and h 8 ，and attacks it on the f －and e－files．Natu－ rally，this is most likely to be effective when the e －and f－files are open and in your control．


Åkesson－C．van Oosterom
Wijk aan Zee 2007

Since 21 ．．．${ }^{3} \mathrm{~h} 822$ 合f7\＃is instant mate．
 25 息xf6 gxf6 26 菐g8\＃（1－0）

The dark－squared bishop can also be used in the action．


L．Dominguez－R．Perez
Cuban Ch 2003
兒f8 18 寊xh6！gxh6

19 ©f4
White＇s knight will also play an active role． Note that Black＇s main troops are far away on
the queenside and White has a superiority of at－ tacking forces on the kingside．

## 19．．．譄d7 20 断xh6＋

$20-\mathrm{h} 5$ is also good．



23 펴를





 ©f6＋1－0

As in the case of a sacrifice on $f 7$ against an uncastled king，the attacker can enter on other squares around the king in order to reach f 7 ：


Karthikeyan－Ragger
World Junior Ch，Gaziantep 2008

## 18 鼻66！

Since the capture on g6 leads to forced mate， and 18 ．．． E f8 is met by 19 定xf7 with similar ideas，Black gave his queen away：

 1－0

The next example is a famous one，where a series of sacrifices drags the king out into the centre．


Cifuentes－Zviagintsev
Wijk aan Zee 1995

## 

 pawn for an exchange and an overwhelming ad－ vantage on the dark squares．Therefore，White might as well try keeping the sacrificed rook， even though his king will now be in great danger．




Black＇s attack is unstoppable．
30 㑒 4
Everything else is equally hopeless： 30 䧺e4
 h5！（threatening ．．．鼻xd5＋and ．．．ee8） 31 气f4密xf4 32 gxf 4 （or 32 宴xf4 当xd5，mating）






The sacrifice on f 7 can be a prelude of a to－ tal annihilation of the pawns in front of the king：


Magalashvili－A．Aleksandrov European Ch，Plovdiv 2008
 26 寞e41－0

Or it might clear the road for all the attacking pieces：


Cheparinov－Navara<br>European Team Ch，Khersonisos 2007


29 gitl 宴xg2＋30 名g1 苞xd2－＋．
29．．．．．．xg2＋？！
 \＆fl 甾g3！（Ftačnik）favours Black．


After 31 h 4 ！Black has no more than a draw．





35．．． $\mathrm{E} \mathrm{h} 2+36$ 急e1




36．．．$\triangle \mathrm{xd} 3+$ ！0－1

## After castling，with the f7－pawn protected by the rook

The sacrifice is often made when the attacker has a bishop trained on the e6－square．In this case，the defender＇s extra option of recapturing with his rook may not be a good solution，since the rook is liable to be pinned：


Smirin－Smyslov<br>USSR Ch，Moscow 1988

## 22 2xf7！ $\mathrm{max}^{2}$

In this case，there is no choice，and Black must take with the rook．

23 空xe6 0 ed5（ $D$ ）


Black opens a line for his queen＇s rook to de－ fend its colleague on f 7 ．

24 气e5 美 725 菖xc6
White already has two pawns for a piece，and he will certainly gain at least an exchange．In addition he is not in a hurry and may choose the best moment to recoup his material investment．
䛚 3 1－0


Leko－Mamedyarov
Amber Blindfold，Nice 2008
 33 Og5 1－0

The typical sacrifice can be very effective in conjunction with a weak back rank：


Westin－Fridriksson
Sweden 1973

## 1．．．㟶xc2＋！！0－1

In following example White managed to give an extra impetus to his far－advanced pawn．But
first，he needed to crack the f7－point，and he found an original way to do so．


Maksimenko－Komandini Italy 2003

1置e8！© 5 （D）
1．．．xe8 does not work due to the drastic 2熏g $6+!!$ fxg 63 f7＋

1．．．t．t． 8 8 allows a decisive attack on the vul－



Informator gives in addition the line 1．．．${ }^{\text {Wr}}$ xe8 8
 also breaks through to the f 7 －square thanks to the manoeuvre 㟶c8＋and 些f8．




## Step－by－step attack against the weak f7－square

If we lack a suitable way to smash through with a direct attack，we need to bring up reinforce－ ments first．The most conventional way is to open a file for the rooks．


Moiseev－Luchinkin
Moscow Ch 1979

## 17 f3！

White first opens a line of attack for his rooks against f 7 ．

## 17．．．exf3 18 岁xf3 9 f6

The knight is a temporary obstacle，and can be easily removed：

## 

Black has managed to bring a bishop over to protect f 7 ．However，he lacks space，and as a re－ sult will not be able to involve all his forces in the defence．Meanwhile，White can use every single unit in his army．

21 e 50 d 722 e 4 鼻g6 230 g 5
Almost all the white troops have amassed in their siege of the weak point．

24．．． 0 f 6 is better，but still insufficient： 25
 White．
 （D）


And after pinning down Black＇s forces， White delivers the final blow：
甶f8 31 Efl $1-0$


Topalov－Bu Xiangzhi
Sofia 2008

Black has just played 20．．．e6－e5？，afraid that his bishop on $g 6$ will be excluded from the game．However，this was the lesser evil，since after his actual move，Black has greater prob－ lems with f7－square．

210 xg 6
A decision based on concrete considerations． Although the bishop was passive，it was an im－ portant defender of $\mathbf{f} 7$ ．

21．．．hxg6（ $D$ ）


22 f4
White clears the road for his major pieces． The f1－rook is ready to attack the f7－square．

22．．．exd4 23 買 $x d 4$ b6？
23．．． 8 f 8 or $23 \ldots \mathrm{f} 8$ is more resilient．The
 26 苞xc5 shows an additional danger from the f7－point．Also bad is $23 \ldots$ ．． Qff $^{24}$ e 5 真f8 25


## 24 f5 g5

Black tries to keep the f－file closed at any rate．However，the white queen now has free ac－ cess to h 5 ，and thus the 77 －square．

25 誉h5 0
 followed by ${ }^{[ } \mathrm{xg} 6+$ ．



## Exercises



Black is counting on 13 幽 xg 7 甾g8．Does White have anything better？


This is an easy nut to crack．


White's passed pawn looks doomed. Is it?


How can White burn down his opponent's house?


This combination often occurs in positions with an isolated queen's pawn.


Our focus should be on one particular pawn...


Drag the king out!


The rook will be sorry for leaving f8 so early.

## 16 The Vulnerable Rook＇s Pawn

Once the king has castled on the kingside，the most vulnerable spot in his camp becomes the rook＇s pawn on h 7 （or h2 in the case of White）． It is the furthest from the rest of the forces，and the hardest to protect．The rook has abandoned it，and in many cases it is only the king who keeps an eye on this pawn．Often it is also guarded by the knight on f 6 ，but this piece is more exposed to attack．It can frequently be re－ moved by an attack by a pawn，or else pinned， exchanged，or even annihilated by a sacrifice．

The attacker has at his disposal various at－ tacking mechanisms．Queen and knight can form a highly potent attacking team，and there are a variety of ways by which they can drag a king out from behind its pawn－shield：


## M．Makarov－Volzhin

Russian Team Ch，Moscow 1994

After White＇s standard＇Greek Gift＇bishop sacrifice，the fate of the game is in the hands of White＇s queen and knight．

Now the king lacks defenders，but 20．．．

21 h4
The h－pawn supports the white knight and will play a role as an attacking unit in its own right．

21．．．f6？

Now White has a forced mate．A critical line


凿f7，when the mate threat forces Black to give up material．He is fighting for a draw after


$22 \mathrm{~h} 5+$ 身h6 23 鞀f5
Dragging the king out into the open．




Ponce－Ortiz
Cuba 2002

## 1．．．盢c2！

Black needs to annihilate the knight on f 3 and he opens a pathway for the demolition crew（in the form of the f8－rook）with gain of tempo．




2．．．${ }^{\text {exf }}$ ： 3 g 3

3．．． $\mathrm{Exg} 3+$ ！
The rook is intent on demolishing White＇s defences and securing its queen＇s access to de－ liver mate on h 2 ．

4 富h1 色g1＋！0－1

Lining up the queen and bishop to attack the rook＇s pawn is especially attractive when the opponent＇s king is in the corner square：


Volkov－Akopian
Russian Team Ch，Sochi 2005

## 18．．． $0 \mathrm{f} 3!19$ 显 xc 6

19 gxf3 gxf3 20 克xf3 断e5 is Black＇s main point，when mate is inevitable．Note that his op－ ponent cannot hinder or block the key diagonal．

19．．．뿤e5（D）


## 20 䔩xd6

20 g 3 does not suffice，since the queen finds a good location by $20 \ldots$ ．．．装h 5 ．After 21 道xf3 gxf3， the f6－knight can come into play by ．．． 2 g 4 ，and when White meets this threat with h4，Black will secure victory by ．．．運e7．The same motifs occurs in other lines too．

## 20．．．wisd6 21 gxf3

White has only two minor pieces for the queen，and went on to lose．

From what we have already seen，one might think that the simplest solution is to advance the pawn one square by playing ．．．h6．In some
situations this is indeed essential，and a good way to sidestep the most dangerous threats．But it is certainly no panacea，and in many cases the pawn is exposed to a sacrifice，or leaves a very sore point on g 6 ．Here is a model example of how the g6－square can be exploited：


Staniszewski－A．Grigoryan Warsaw 2008

Black can mobilize his queen and bishop with gain of tempo by using a pin：

23．．． $\int \mathrm{f} 3+$ ！ 24 gxf3 㽞xe2！
Removing an important defender．
 \＆ $\mathbf{c} 7$（ $D$ ）


Black＇s queen and bishop work together in perfect harmony．

## 28 f4 0 4－1

Queen and rook constitute a lot of fire－ power that works well on the rook＇s file．If the attacking side has not yet castled，or has cas－ tled on the opposite wing，then it may be quite straightforward to bring a rook into the as－ sault．

## V．Georgiev－Kurajica

Solin 2007





Black has not handled the opening very suc－ cessfully，and White now starts an attack against h7．

## 12 g． 5 ！

For the moment the threat is to exchange the knight，so Black＇s next move is forced：

12．．．g6
However，this advance provides a point of contact which allows White to open the h －file．

13 h 4 ！
Sometimes it is useful to postpone castling！



White has a decisive advantage of forces on the kingside．The position must be opened now：

 e3 血e6 22 包 5 a6 23 臬 4 血xc4 24 分xc4 b5 25 分66 1－0

The 幽 + 皆 mechanism can also be used after same－side castling with the help of the rook－ lift：


Keres－Fine
Ostend 1937
The rook reaches the h －file in front of its pawns：

A desperate attempt to deflect White＇s forces． However，White has achieved enough already．


的e8 31 e6 1－0

The double bishop sacrifice is one of the best－known ways to demolish a castled posi－ tion．Although it is quite rare for the double sac－ rifice to occur in practice，it is an important method that is in the background in many types of position－one must be familiar with the idea to attack or defend these positions successfully． The first example of it was created by Emanuel Lasker．It has features in common with the 曹 + 觉 attacks we have just seen，but the difference is
that the stronger side sacrifices two bishops first，in order to open both the $g$－and the h－files for the major pieces．Here is a recent example：

W


Sutovsky－Vavrak<br>European Ch，Plovdiv 2008

20 悤xh7＋！
White begins destroying the black king＇s fortifications．
 （D）





## 23 真xg7！

The second sacrifice，which cannot be ac－ cepted due to $\begin{aligned} & \text { Wig } \\ & \text { 5 }\end{aligned}$ followed by a rook－lift on third，fourth or sixth rank．

With or without the bishop，White will deci－ sively use the open file．

In the following example White uses the b7－ rook as a decisive reinforcement：

20 貝xh7＋！客f8


Miroshnichenko－Gunnarsson
European Ch，Ohrid 2001
喽h $1+$ ．

发xh 25 皀xf7＋or $22 \ldots$ ．．． 24 gig $3+$ ，when again the rook takes part in the assault since it prevents the ．．．盆g4 covering re－ source．

And here is an example by Garry Kasparov himself on a closely related theme：


Kasparov－Portisch
Nikšićc 1983
手xg722 2 e5！

The point．White reaches the g －and h －files in an unconventional way．In some lines，the rook might be used via the seventh rank．

22．．．． mfd 8
Or：
 bishop is lost．

筫xe7＋＋





## 25 d7＋！

After $25 \mathrm{~g} 6+$ ，Black must avoid $25 \ldots$ ．．．${ }^{3} \mathrm{e} 8$ ？


 up．The best defence is $25 \ldots$ ．．．ff when 26 e $2+$ dif8 returns to the game position，when White should continue 27 ） $\mathrm{d} 7+$ ！．
録 $\mathrm{h} 8+$ ！

White has to be precise if he is to keep his raging attack going．Here 28 邕d3？allows
 $29 . .$. 負c5＋30 equality．

28．．．


30．．． 0 e5？
$30 \ldots$ 宽d6 is the only chance to stay in the


32 h 4 may give White some advantage，while 31苞h3 also makes life very difficult for Black． However，this is far from being lost by force for Black，which is the case after his actual choice．



The pairing of rook and bishop can be very effective if the bishop is supporting a back－rank mate．In that case it makes sense to sacrifice on $h 7$ in order to open the h－file．


Svetushkin－Economescu
Bucharest 2001
26 告xh7！皃xh7
 pieces reach the $h$－file as well．

27 胆 e 3 g g （ $D$ ）
Black may also try to distract some of the white troops，but they will not be interested：

 32 畄 $\mathrm{xc} 5+$－


28 思 $3+$ Qh6 29 f5 宸xa2
29．．．邑xc5 30 䍘xh6＋！＋

30 黄xh6＋！盆xh6 31 g5 1－0
$31 \ldots$ ． $2 \mathrm{e} 2+32$ 頻 $1+$－
Three minor pieces can successfully mate if they control the important diagonals：


Bojkov－Berend
Differdange 2007

## 18 嵝h5！

A decisive way to bring the most powerful piece into the attack．The queen is poisoned due to a well－known mating pattern called Black－ burne＇s Mate．

18．．．h6
18．．．gxh5 19 夏xh7\＃．
19 嗢xg
The rest is easy，as White has decisive supe－ riority of force．
 0f7＋gig 1－0

## Exercises


h 7 is protected only by the king，but the rook will soon support it unless White acts now．


White is attacking h 7 twice．Make it thrice．

a2 can be just as vulnerable as h7．


There＇s no need for a double bishop sacrifice here．


How should White crown his massive attack?


Two silent subtleties decide the game.


Break through to the most vulnerable square.


A disaster should befall Black here.

## 17 Attacking the Fianchetto

The fianchetto is a very common structure in chess．Many openings are based on it，such as the Dragon，Pirc，King＇s and Queen＇s Indian and Grünfeld Defences，Réti and Catalan Open－ ings，etc．From its comfortable position on the long diagonal，the bishop exerts a great influ－ ence upon the centre．At the same time，the pawn－shield in front of the king looks stable， with the bishop neatly plugging the gaps left by the knight＇s pawn．However，if we manage to exchange the bishop，the whole complex of squares that it defends will become vulnerable． We have two standard plans to shatter the fian－ chetto：

1．Exchange the fianchettoed bishop and at－ tack the weak squares around it．

2．Advance the rook＇s pawn in order to open the h －file（or a－file），and use the open file to bring in the major pieces．

## Exchange the Fianchettoed Bishop

Pogonina－Biriukov
Russian Under－26 Ch，Novokuznetsk 2007




9 念h6
This is a standard plan for these positions． White seeks to exploit the squares left weak－ ened by the fianchetto．

9．．．0－0 $100-0$ b4 11 気e2
The knight is heading for g 3 and the king－ side．

11．．．c5 12 气g3 貝xh6？
A bad decision，since the white queen is now too close to the enemy king．Sometimes it is the right decision to draw the queen to the edge of the board in this way in order to strike back in the centre，but this must always be judged very carefully．Here White＇s attack is too strong． Black should wait for White to exchange on g7．

13 宸xh6 cxd4（D）


14 g 5 ！
White continues aggressively．She ties the f6－knight to the defence of the h7－pawn，and prepares an advance of her f－pawn to open the way for the rook to annihilate this knight．The queen feels more than comfortable on h 6 ．

## 14．．．e5

In case of 14．．．Qbd7 White plays 15 f4！with the threat of e5．The main defender is obviously the f6－knight，and it is supported by its col－ league from d 7 ．They both need to be removed！ Now：
包f5！gxf5（after 18．．．新e7 19 登ef1 both knights will soon be destroyed） $190 x f 5$ and due to the threat 20 山g7\＃，Black needs to part with his queen．
b） $15 .$. 宸c7 16 最ae1（with the idea 17 e 5 ） 16．．．宸c6（hitting g2） 17 㟶 f 2 ！（protecting g2，
and preparing to double rooks on the f －file） 17．．．e5 18 fxe5 dxe5 19 菛efl（White is ready to annihilate the knights）19．．．畄 $\mathrm{fc} 8(\mathrm{D})$ ．


White now has a pleasant choice：
bl） 20 息c4（deflecting the strongest piece
 22 崖xf6 曾 c 7 ．The point is that after 23 b 3 ！ Black＇s queen is finally deflected from the f 7 －


b2） 20 昆xf6 is a straightforward approach． $20 . . .0 x f 621$ hh5！（it is important that White clears the sixth rank，so that the rook is de－
 ning a piece．

14．．．整 $5(D)$ is another defensive try．

W


However，it fails to 15 h5！！，opening the bl－h7 diagonal with decisive effect．15．．．gxh5 16 e5！仓bd7 17 exf6 $0 x f 618$ 全xh7＋安h8 19蕞d3＋（19 象e4＋is also good enough to win） 19．．．tig 820 ael and Black is totally helpless．

15 f4 Dd7 16 fxe5 dxe5（ $D$ ）
17 苞xf6！
17 In 3 is also good，but when you have iden－ tified the most important defenders and have a

chance to destroy them，there is rarely any need to hesitate！

## 

We have already seen this method in the pre－ vious notes．
鄀h6 1－0

White conducted the attack flawlessly，but her opponent allowed her too much leeway．

Here is a similar case but with a different at－ tacking formation，which is characteristic of the Sicilian Grand Prix Attack：


Rogovsky－Tukhaev
Ukrainian Ch，Alushta 2002

## 11 亶h6！

White is ready to build the winning con－ struction with his knight on g 5 ，like in the pre－ vious example．

11．．． 0 e5 12 包 5 賭d7
12．．．鼻6 13 复xf8 息xg5 14 数xg5 级xf8 is a little better，although White wins by 15 嵝 f 6 ．




Here is a similar attack with additional sup－ port from an open e－file：


Gongora－Guerrero
Cuba 2003

## 1 免 5 ！

This forces a swift mate．White is really spoilt for choice here，as 10 g 5 followed by 0 h 5 ！is another quick way to achieve victory－the same idea as we saw in Pogonina－Biriukov above．

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \text { 1...gxh5 } \\
& \text { 1... } 0 \times x \text { 5 } 2 \text { 筧e8+ + }
\end{aligned}
$$

Defenders are rarely naïve enough to ex－ change off their own fianchettoed bishop and invite a devastating attack．That is why in many cases we need to sacrifice material to achieve this aim．


Ni Hua－Malakhatko
Gibraltar 2008



The dark squares have been cracked open．


Freidles－Ben－Pinchas Israel 2002

White needs to get rid of his opponent＇s bishop and finds an original way to do so：

1 分xe7＋！ 0 xe7

 2 矣f6！
The point．White exchanges the most im－ portant defender，and Black＇s pieces start to hang．He will now have problems with the dark squares in all lines．

2．．．b3（D）
Black seeks counterplay with his passed pawn．Blocking the bishop with 2．．．Qf5 does not save him： 3 是xh8 b3（3．．．．훌xh8 4 exf5



2．．． 0 d5 is also insufficient： 3 exd5 xel +4




## 

A reasonable practical choice，but missing 4 exd5！党xe1＋5 㝬2，when White wins due to his mating ideas．

## 4．．．bxa2


 Black．



7．．．＇ig8？！
7 ．．．岺c3 is the only way to prolong the strug－ gle．Now White wins by force as his mating threats trump Black＇s passed pawn．

8 對a1 㟶xe1＋
8．．．f6 9 委g2 + －
 12 相g2 1－0

12．．．al剭 13 敕d8\＃．

## Advance the Rook＇s Pawn

## Riazantsev－Yandemirov

Moscow 2008



 cxd4 17 cxd4 e6（D）


White has tried to weaken the fianchetto，but his opponent did not allow the exchange of bishops．White now turns to the second plan we described at the start of the chapter．He can af－ ford to advance his h－pawn thanks to his space advantage and the stable central structure．

18 h4：©c6 19 \＃̈fd 気 720 h 5 Eac8 21


White hits the sore point g6 with more pieces．
22．．．㟶xd4 23 全c2 峟c5
 24 hxg6
Finally breaking in，even with the bishops on the board．

24．．．豈xc2
24．．．hxg6 25 宣xg6 fxg6 26 分xg6 올h7 27 0xh8＋－
Riazantsev now concluded the game in style：

26．．．名6？！allows 27 膤xd8＋．Black＇s only attempt to prolong the game was $26 \ldots . . \begin{aligned} & \text { WI } \\ & d I+27\end{aligned}$
 （29．．．f6 fails to 30 曹xf6＋©宣e3） 30 㟶xh5 but it is understandable that Yandemirov chose not to bother with this．



The rook＇s pawn advance is especially effec－ tive if the attacker can use the open lines for his rooks：


Topalov－Kramnik
World Ch match（game 2），Elista 2006
This position arose from the Slav Defence． Although technically speaking Black does not have a fianchettoed bishop，his position is weak－ ened with the move ．．．g6 and is similar．

## 26 h4！品b4

宽xh4 30 f 6 wins for White．

## 27 h 5 断 b 5

At this stage most people who were analys－ ing with their computers and not their brains thought Kramnik was clearly better．However， Topalov had a clear idea that he soon revealed：

## 28 断c2！茙 $x b 2$

28 ．．． m b3 is answered similarly．
29 hxg6！！（ $D$ ）


## 29．．．h5

It suddenly becomes apparent that after

筑xg6 跸 h 835 f6！！Black is getting mated．

30 g7！hxg4
30．．． 0 h 7 ？fails to 31 㱠g6 hxg4 32 単xe6＋皃xg7 33 㫧xg4＋

## 31 gxf8嵝＋寞xf8？？

Black＇s only option was $31 \ldots$ ．．$\times f 832$ wh7



 and prepares ．．．Eh $8+$ ．This looks quite unclear．

32 㟶 $66+?$ ？
An incredible case of mutual chess blindness －we wonder what Kasparov must have thought of this！

White had a trivial win by 32 显xg4＋宽 g 7

 the checks．This is an important pattern－with the interposing knight protecting against queen checks－to commit to memory．

After this mistake，Topalov continued to go astray and even lost in the end．

After the opening of the h－file，the fian－ chettoed bishop remains the key piece to elim－ inate．Once the bishop is gone，the attacker＇s major pieces will have more entry points．


Finkel－Kantsler
Kfar－Saba 1999

## 1 算dh1！！

White triples his major pieces，creating a mating threat．

1．．．e6
A desperate attempt to escape． $1 . . .0 \times \mathrm{Ed} 4$ al－ lows an instant mate by 2 憎 $\mathrm{h} 8+$ ！宽xh8 3 前xh8＋


2 号xe6＋！
But now White clears the seventh rank，and performs the same operation．



兑 1 h7\＃follows．Both rooks did a great job！

## Exercises



White＇s fianchetto structure lacks its bishop． Conclude the attack．


Although not too far away, Black's main defender is missing from his post.


Create and exploit a double check.


Enemy number one is ... ?
7


Play like a world champion!


Is everything rock solid in the white position?

# 18 The Mystery of the Opposite－Coloured Bishops 

In endgames，the presence of opposite－coloured bishops can increase the defender＇s chances to hold a draw，but in the middlegame they tend to strengthen the attacker＇s chances．The reason is that the attacker can play mainly on the squares of the colour of his bishop，which the defender＇s bishop cannot challenge．

Here are some principles to bear in mind in this scenario：

1．The correct strategy is to attack the king． A material or positional advantage is not so im－ portant if the king is in danger．

2．Try to conduct the game on the colour of your own bishop．

3．The more major pieces you have on the board，the better are your chances for a success－ ful attack．

4．The presence of knights usually helps the defender，since they may protect squares of both colours and be exchanged for a bishop．

5．Make sure that your bishop is active，even at the cost of a pawn or more．

Let＇s take a look at an example where the king comes under attack in the centre when there are opposite－coloured bishops．

## Macieja－Vescovi <br> Bermuda 2004

 exd4 6 e5 d5 7 宣b5 0e4 8 cxd4 真b6 9 cu
 © $x$ ？

Black takes a firm grip of the game now． 13 h3？惫a6 is also bad，but White should play 13 Wb3，which is best met by 13．．．Wg6！，as in Row－ son－I．Sokolov，Selfoss 2003，and not 13．．．全h3

 compensation for the lost material．

13．．．dxe4 14 d2（D）


## 14．．．直 $96!$

Black sacrifices a pawn in order to keep his opponent＇s king in the centre．This is in accor－ dance with the principle＇initiative over mate－


## 150 xe 4

After 15 隠g4 ${ }^{\text {gae }} 8$ Black holds the initia－ tive．

15．．．全 5 5＋
Black＇s position now looks very harmoni－ ous．A sense of aesthetics can be quite a useful guide in judging such positions．

16 角 3 （D）
16 ©d2 loses instantly to 16 ．．．膤xf2＋fol－ lowed by ．．．Eae $8+$ ．


## 16．．．臬xc3＋！

As the old saying goes，one of the greatest advantages of having the bishop－pair is that you can chose the best moment to give it up！Now we have a position with opposite－coloured bish－ ops，where Black has a winning attack．

## 17 bxc3 ${ }^{\omega} \mathrm{g} 6$

Black strikes on the light squares，where his opponent is weak．17．．．c5！？also deserves atten－ tion．

## 18 並 $b 1 ?!$

Eventually White will lose the b－file，which is not a surprise，because his king hinders the connection of the rooks．He had to play pas－
 19 c 4 宸 xg 2 is also bad for White．

18．．．．d $\mathbf{d} 19$ 登 $b 7$
19 当 b 2 ${ }^{\text {® }} \mathrm{ab} 8-+$ ．

Black seeks a highway for his rook on the open $b$－file．

## 

There is no defence against the penetration on the $b$－file．In addition to his problems on the light squares，White is playing practically with－ out his hl－rook．

 0－1

As noted above，the initiative is everything in some opposite－bishop positions．


> Sargisian - Stellwagen
> Wijk aan Zee 2007

## 15．．．b5？

The wrong decision．Black is going for oppo－ site－coloured bishops but this will favour White！
 19 数h1 曹xb5（D）


## 20 㧝g4！$\pm$

The target now is g 7 ．
幽a5 24 b4 㟶b6 25 鼻d4！

White sacrifices a pawn－we know that when we have opposite－coloured bishops，ma－ terial is less important than the attack．Thus White gains time for his al－rook to perform a rook－lift and join the attack without delay．



27 घึb3！＋－
The idea is
27．．．蕞c8
Black intends ．．． 息e6 to blockade the pawn $^{2}$ on e5 and thus shut off the d4－bishop．

28 e6！！
White opens a line for his d4－bishop．Re－ member that the initiative is more important than material with opposite bishops！



White fails to follow our principles！ 32 登 f 1

 intending to sacrifice on f6 next move.
32... $\mathbf{~ H} 8$ ?

32 ...g6 was the only move.

Here is an example of conducting the attack on the colour squares that your bishop controls.


Seirawan - Leenhouts
Dutch Team Ch 2008
White creates a dark-squared mating-net:
 57 \% ${ }^{\text {g } 7+!~ 1-0 ~}$
㧛d8+.

Some time ago when analysing a sharp Sicilian line with a student of mine, I (DB) discovered the following position, which convinced me that initiative is everything when attacking with opposite-coloured bishops:

(This position occurs in analysis by Euwe of a sharp line in the Pin Variation.)

## 

There is another way to deliver mate: 19

 dd6\#. But we are more interested in a pure op-posite-coloured-bishops attack.
19...




Black is two rooks ahead, but cannot prevent the inevitable mate.
26...官d7

Black is trying to cover his king with the bishop, but White transfers the attack to the colour of his bishop after capturing the rook.




Kamsky - Kasparov
Manila Olympiad 1992
When you have an overwhelming advantage on the squares of your bishop, your opponent's only chance might be to surrender an exchange to eliminate the bishop.

## 31 㟶e2

31 b3 loses on the spot to 31 ．．．Ec8 32 ต．c2笑c4＋ 33 bxc4 登b2＋．

White places his rooks on the diagonal of the black bishop，desperately trying to attract its at－ tention．

32．．．${ }^{\text {学 }} \mathbf{1 8}$（ D ）


Kasparov is not interested，and rightly plays for the attack．The unopposed bishop is worth more than a mere rook！

## 33 b3

Now the dark squares in White＇s camp be－ come hopelessly weak，but Kasparov was al－ ready threatening mate： $33 \mathrm{~h} 4 \mathrm{wal}+34 \mathrm{elc} 2$



 ec3＋and Black mates．

身c2 岩xh2＋0－1

Clearance ideas are especially effective when there are opposite－coloured bishops．We
use them mainly to open space for our bishop． Here is an example in which a file is opened so a rook can combine its power with that of the bishop．


Ki．Georgiev－Macieja
Calvia Olympiad 2004
White＇s bishop is great，but not his rook． This，however，is subject to change：

We can also annihilate the opponent＇s bishop if it is too good in its defensive role：


With his last move，．．．f4！，Black started a de－ cisive attack．He will now clear all files，ranks and diagonals you may think of！

The bishop was doing a really good job．In－ stead of continuing the attack on light squares， Black drags his opponent＇s king into his camp．



Here is an example of my own，where I tem－ porarily sacrificed a pawn in order to achieve a favourable opposite－coloured－bishops posi－ tion：


## V．Georgiev－Paragua

Turin 2000

宸xb7訔d3 31 弟e1。



Black had to try $32 \ldots$ ．．宸 $\times 4$ ．
33 宣 4 ？
33 f 4 followed by ${ }^{\text {a }} \mathrm{e}$ 1 is a more incisive continuation．



Even in simple－looking endgames，mating attacks involving opposite－coloured bishops can prove devastating，especially when the de－ fender＇s king is short of space：


## E．Pogosiants

Shakhmaty v SSSR， 1981

In this study Black will have to part with his bishop if he does not want to allow mate．

1 名f6

1．．．灵f8
象e7 and the knight lands on f6） 4 c8 and mate．

White wins．

## Exercises



Make use of your＇extra＇piece．


The beast is asleep．．．


Find a way to break in.


White has not yet castled...


Find a vigorous way for White to press home his attack on the light squares.


Black must find a favourable transformation to an opposite-bishops situation.


White needs to win the black pawn, or else must play for mate.


Remember the principles and find the best way for White to smash through.

## 19 Chess Highways：Open Files

Pawns shape the chessboard struggle and dic－ tate the natural plans for both sides，so their mere absence from a file marks it out as an im－ portant chess highway．An＇open file＇is one with no pawns on it，while if it contains only an enemy pawn，then we call it a＇semi－open file＇． There is a huge difference between the two，as a semi－open file is a one－way street，while an open file can be used by both players．Open files should in most cases be controlled by ma－ jor pieces，preferably rooks．Via the open files one can invade the enemy position．You should seek to control open files，and this will often give you a significant advantage．As always there are some exceptions，as a file may have little value if there are no possible entry－squares on it，while contesting an open file over which you will ultimately lose control may only serve to aggravate your problems．And in yet other cases，occupying an open file might only lead to mass exchanges，and a dissipation of your advantage．

We should note that the rook is the only piece that does not need to be centralized to show its full potential．The only thing that it needs is open space．


In the diagrammed position，the side that is about to move will certainly occupy the open b－file．In its initial position the rook controls only five squares，while on the b－file the num－ ber of squares within its reach increases to 12 ．

From here it can penetrate the opponent＇s camp．The seventh rank is an especially juicy target，as there are several enemy pawns on this rank．A further typical benefit of putting a rook on the seventh rank is that this tends to restrict the enemy king．

Here is a summary of some useful general pointers for play with open files：

1．Get control over the open file．
2．Double rooks．
3．The best place for a rook is on the seventh rank．

4．Penetrate the enemy position and destroy it．


Simagin－Kotov
Moscow Ch 1945

## 15 岿d4

With this move White fights for the only open file．

Better is $16 \ldots$ 崽e6 17 e4 㟶a5 intending ．．． E fd8．

A typical idea to double rooks on the open file．
甼d6 数b6

White has gained full control over the only open file．What will be his plan to convert the
advantage？First he needs to advance his pawns， staking out more space．

## 23 b4 甾e6 24 苗 6 d4！

The side with a dynamic advantage should normally try to avoid exchanges，especially of his most active pieces．



譄xe6！

A good decision：White liquidates to an eas－ ily winning ending．This is the simplest way to realize the advantage．
档e7 42 f5！

In order to create a passed pawn．







A very instructive game．White demonstrated a typical plan for making the most of his advan－ tages in this kind of position．The overall plan can be summarized as follows

1．First win the only open file．
2．Then push pawns to get a space advan－ tage．

3．Finally liquidate to a winning rook end－ ing．


Wojtaszek－Bobras
Polish Ch，Lublin 2008

## 20 䍖 $d 1$ ！

The best place for the rook is the open file．

20．．．寊e6
White now gains control over the d－file us－ ing line－clearance and a zwischenzug：

The best move！Rooks love the seventh rank．
23．．．薮xc4 24 bxc4 eab8 25 － fd 1
White is clearly better thanks to his control of the open file，via which he can invade the en－ emy position．



As we know，White should push the pawns first and then create a passed pawn to win the game．

30 c5 홉e8 31 芭b1




Mamedyarov－Svidler
European Team Ch，Khersonisos 2007

## 18．．．塭g4！

Black takes control of the open d－file by at－ tacking the d1－square．White will never get the chance to double rooks on the d－file．

19 总 e 1

自xf5 嵝xf5 +26 엽al 曹e4 and Black breaks through．

## 

Preparing to double rooks on the open file．
21 童xg4 蒋xg4 22 e5



## 22．．．．${ }^{-1} f d 8$

Now Black is getting a firm grip over the d－ file．
 ※8d5 27 愘 a （ $D$ ）


It is time for stage two of our procedure． 27．．．a5
As Black＇s control over the d－file is absolute， he now advances his pawns to start an attack．

新 $\mathrm{bl}+34$ 혈 b 3 曾d3＋．
 35 㒭 5 岩b3 0－1

Before we open the position，our rooks sit modestly behind the pawn－chains．We may use the pawn－shelter to establish control over a file before we open it．To do this，we double rooks behind our pawn before exchanging it．This is especially effective if the pawn－tension is in our favour（i．e．our opponent does not have a good way to resolve the tension）：


## V．Georgiev－Vallejo Pons <br> Elgoibar 1998




## 14 แैс2！

White wants to double rooks first，before the c－file is opened．If White captures on d 5 first， Black will take back with his e－pawn，keeping the c －file semi－closed．Note that Black cannot exchange by $14 \ldots \mathrm{dxc} 4$ as this destroys his struc－ ture；nor can he just sit and wait，as he needs to develop his queenside．

14．．． 0 d7 15 cxd5
Right on time．Now Black has no choice， since the c6－pawn is unprotected．

15．．．cxd5 16 光ac1 $\pm$
White has complete control over the c－file and threatens © ${ }^{\text {it }}$ a6．

16．．．a6
Black parries White＇s threat，but the pawns on their third rank are now rather vulnerable．

The second step is to enter the enemy posi－ tion．



19．．．h6？！
Black takes measures against White＇s g4 idea，but this leaves more squares on Black＇s
third rank unprotected and so allows another potent attacking idea．

20 察xf5！
20 㟶c7 is met by $20 \ldots$ ．．．．e8．

While this move was enough for a win later on，White could have won immediately by 22
 +- ．Therefore the rest of the game is not so rele－ vant to our discussion．

An alternative method to gain control over an open file is to install one of our pieces on the file and then to double rooks behind it：


Bojkov－Van den Doel
Zwolle 2007
Although analysis engines tend to be luke－ warm about White＇s chances（and some even evaluate this position in Black＇s favour！），I am inclined to think that White is strategically win－ ning．The plan is simple：install the knight on b 6 ，which gives Black a difficult choice：allow White to exchange on b4 and later win this pawn，or make the exchange on c 3 ，after which White will double rooks on the b－file in the shadow of the knight and then penetrate with them at the right moment．

This loses some time and only helps White＇s plans．




I started to feel quite nervous in my oppo－ nent＇s time－trouble，and missed the clear win 35


 some reason I thought that somewhere in these lines he could bring his queen to a 4 and achieve perpetual check．
 and White won later with some difficulties．

We already know the importance of an open file，and how effective its use can be．Under cer－ tain circumstances it can be well worth sacrific－ ing material to gain complete control over a vital highway．


V．Milov－Ramesh<br>Biel（rapid） 2000

## 

Sacrificing a bishop to energize his rooks． But 2 שxc $2!?$ may be better，dominating the c－ file and keeping Black under pressure．

2．．．息xd3 3 界 1 1！？
 Gf8 5 Eh8＋（bf7，with a draw．White now threatens 4 䍐h8，and Black must find the right countersacrifice to grant him counterplay．

## 3．．．㝠d8？

This fails to hinder White＇s plan，as do
畧h8．However，3．．．宣c4！is a good defence： 4
 Eh8 c 3 ，and Black＇s counterplay arrives in time to force White to take a draw．
害f6＋（


We have already noted that after occupying an open file，rooks need to strive for the seventh
rank. One bonus idea is that two rooks on the seventh rank are capable of delivering mate on their own:


## Y. Averbakh

 4 当bg7\#

The rooks managed to deliver mate due to the poor position of Black's rook on 88 , where it obstructed his own king.

We should note that two rooks supported by a single pawn can give mate without any such assistance from the enemy pieces. Here is an example where White makes use of this fact.


## Krasenkow - Kveinys

Polish Team Ch, Lubniewice 2002
Krasenkow first occupies the open c-file with his rooks:



Then he uses the power of his pawn to secure absolute control over the seventh rank.

The harvest starts now.




White now wraps up the game by advancing his h-pawn.
 h6! 1-0

The pawn is protecting the g 7 -rook, and its colleague is free to finish Black off.

> Topalov - Anand
> Bilbao 2008




A good move. The rook occupies a file that will soon be opened.





As a result of his accurate play, Topalov has won the only open file.
18...0-0 19 亘ad1

Doubling rooks, which will help White invade the seventh rank.



22 ） 3 ！
With this move，White starts a decisive at－ tack against Black＇s king thanks to the domi－ nant position of the rook on the seventh rank and the fact that Black＇s kingside contains weak－ nesses．

22．．．c4
Or：
a） $22 \ldots .0 \mathrm{~d} 423$ ©e5 $0 \mathrm{c} 624 \mathrm{f} 4 \omega_{\mathrm{xe} 5} 25$
 of doubling rooks on the seventh rank while Black lacks any real counterplay．
b） 22 ．．．． Cm d 8 again allows White to double his major pieces on the seventh rank： 23 宸 b 7 ？
第xf7 $\pm$ ．

## 

Doubled rooks on the seventh rank may be very potent in the endgame too．Here is one more example from Topalov：


Topalov－Vallejo Pons
Dos Hermanas（rapid） 2008
 30 连c7！（ $D$ ）

E．Espinosa－Miranda
Cuba 2004

Black＇s king has lingered too long in the cen－ tre and White proves the folly of such an ap－ proach with energetic play．

White sacrifices a second piece to clear both central files for his rooks．We have seen this method in the Clearance chapter．

2．．．喭xg5


Another subtle move．White clears the way for the other rook to occupy the e－file with gain of tempo．

4．．．嚉f6
Or：
 mxf7＋！and White wins．






## 1－0

Open files can also be used against the cas－ tled position．Here White has already managed to open the h －file for his rook，and has activated the other one thanks to a rook－lift．

## 1 ＝xg7＋！

White sacrifices both rooks in order to anni－ hilate the last defenders of Black＇s king．The queen and bishop will do the rest．

1．．．
2．．．



3 ${ }^{\text {Exh }} 7+$ ！1－0



We have seen that rooks work together very well on the seventh rank．They can also coordi－ nate well on the edges of the board，especially if the enemy king has been denuded．


Tovio－Zarate
Cartagena 2005
First White smashes through on the half－ open h －file：

1 黄xh7＋！
1 ）f6！is also effective．
1．．．筫xh72鼻e4皆fd8
Or：
a） $2 . . . \mathrm{g} 63$ 分 6 and $\mathbf{5 x h} \mathrm{xh} 7$ ．
b） 2 ．．．挡g8 3 鼻xh7＋홀h8 4 㿻h4 and mate will follow．
c） $2 \ldots . .55$ ！？was the best practical chance，al－


 8 昷xf7 and Black is mated on the h－file with異hl\＃．

The threat is simple：${ }^{\text {Ench}} 1$ ．

If the kings have castled on the same wing，it is normally too risky to attack the enemy king with a pawn－storm，as this exposes one＇s own king to a counterattack．In this case we trans－ fer our rooks in front of our pawn－chain．This method is called the rook－lift．


Bargan－Agafii
Chisinau 2005
White first detonates the position of his op－ ponent＇s king：

2．．．仓h7 does not prevent the rook－lift： 3 品 3
 accomplished，and Black now has no choice but to open up his king：5．．．f5 6 定xe6 皆cd8 7 䍙d7！常xd78 曹xf8\＃

2 ．．．$\circlearrowright x$ xe5 only helps yet another rook－lift，


 10 罢e7＋and White wins．


Now the rook joins the fray．
3 岂d3！
This is the right rook；the other should con－ trol e5．

Black is helpless．
One open file can be sufficient for a rook to do its evil work：


Maksimenko－P．H．Nielsen Germany 2003

## 1 分xc6！©xc6 2 嶙xh7＋！曾xh7




Black＇s king has nowhere to run，and is inevitable．

In the following example Black could not deliver mate，but the energy of his pieces on the h－file was sufficient to win material by chasing the white king into forks．


Zavgorodny－Moiseenko Ukrainian Team Ch，Alushta 2005

32．．．㟴xf1＋！！ 33 䆥xf1


White resigned in view of 35 宫f 2 発xf1 $1+36$
 $0 \mathrm{~d} 3+$ 。


Exploit the open e－file．

## Exercises



Should White double his rooks on the open file？


White＇s major pieces look impressive．Make use of them．


Find a tactical way to occupy an important file.

Both kings are in danger, and it is Black to move.



Black has already lifted his rook...

## 20 Trapping a Piece

We can trap a piece in two ways．The first is the more straightforward：we attack a piece that has no escape－squares，and then capture it．The sec－ ond method is shutting a piece out of the battle． In this case our opponent still has his piece on the board，but it is so limited（by our dominant pieces or his own troops）that it is practically useless．

Both methods are very common；mate for in－ stance is limitation of the opponent＇s king，fol－ lowed by trapping it．A strategy for trapping starts with the restriction of the opponent＇s pieces，which makes them vulnerable because they lack good squares．Once we have brought up reinforcements，we can start harvesting the fruit of our strategy．

Here is a famous example where Kasparov paralyses most of Karpov＇s army thanks to the supreme coordination of his pieces，and one very well－placed knight in particular．

Karpov－Kasparov<br>World Ch match（game 16）， Moscow 1985


 exd5 10 exd5 0 b4 11 真 e 2 宜 5 ？ 12 0－0？0－0



15 数d2

Karpov does not feel the danger，and decides to keep the pawn．More advisable is 15 c4鼻d316a3全xc4（16．．．鼻xfl？ 17 axb 4 䙾xc4 18 bxc5 $\pm$ ） 17 axb 4 置xb4 18 営el，by which White relieves his defence and obtains an equal game．

15．．．b5！
This move takes away the c4－square from the a3－knight and forces it to endure a misera－ ble existence．Pawns are very well suited to the task of restricting enemy pieces．

## 16 Ead1 0 d 3 ！

A knight could not dream of a better career． From this excellent outpost，it denies White＇s rooks access to both open files，and will play the dominant role for the rest of the game．The principle is the same as for the pawns：it is most effective to restrict enemy pieces with less valu－ able ones of our own．

17 Oab1？
17 d 6 is better，and leads to complications．
17．．．h6！ 18 寊h4 b4！ 19 ta4
19 Qe2 g5！20 余xg5 ©xf2 and Black is on top．

19．．．窒d6（D）
Kasparov had this position on his analysis board before the game－an impressive piece of preparation，and a demonstration of how well he understood his opponent and could antici－ pate his choices．


A mere glance at the position now will con－ vince us that Black has achieved everything
that he could hope for by using the limitation principle．Both white knights lack prospects （and any moves at all），while the same goes for his rooks，and even the white queen has few prospects．At the same time，the black pieces that are restricting them possess great energy． The white pieces are in constant danger of be－ ing trapped．

## 20 曽g 3

 threatens to trap the queen with $22 \ldots$ 蒐c2） 22
 traps the bishop．This should not astonish you； many similar lines will follow，in which White＇s pieces suffer．

20．．． 昌c8
Thanks to the monster on d3，Black has oc－ cupied both open files（remember what we said about bringing up reinforcements！）．

21 b 3
Karpov wants to bring his knight back into the game via b2．

21．．．g5！！（D）


This excellent move is still based on the idea of restricting White＇s pieces：by means of a highly concrete idea，Kasparov prevents his op－ ponent from freeing his position．The loosening of Black＇s kingside is of no consequence，as long as White lacks active pieces to exploit it．

## 22 置xd6

The point of Black＇s ．．．g5 idea is seen in the line 220 b 2 ？ 0 xb 223 豈xb2 g 4 ，where the white bishop is lost，while after 22 置e2？分e4 23 状xd3 $0 x g 3$ White loses material． 22 h 4 is a weakening move，since White＇s inability to ma－ noeuvre his pieces makes it hard for him to de－ fend，whereas Black possesses more space and both open files and can easily supply more
troops：22．．．气e4 23 愠xe4 息xe4 24 hxg 5 真xg3
 survive the attack．

## 22．．．膤xd6 23 g 3


 leads to mate，while $27 山 / \mathrm{H}$ c gives Black a choice between $27 \ldots$ ．．．．．c2，nicely trapping the queen，and $27 \ldots 0 h 3+$ ，followed by $28 \ldots$ 旡e $4+$ ，
 mates） 28 gxf4 ${ }^{6} \mathrm{~h} 5$ and the queen moves in to give mate．

## 23．．． 0 d7！ 24 息g 2

24 b2 ${ }_{6} \mathrm{E}$ f6！！may lead to another physical
 （D）．


A fork on f 3 will follow．
睍 g 628 d 6



28．．．g4！ 29 宸d2
$30 \mathrm{f} 4{ }_{\mathrm{G}}^{\mathrm{G}} \mathrm{d} 4+31$ tith1 賣f5．



## 31 fxg4


 where Black has total domination．

The rest of the game was played by Kaspar－ ov with his usual energy．He first won material and then organized the decisive assault．





Finally the poor knight joins the game，only to discover that it is all over．

39．．．．${ }^{\text {ene }}$ e2！mates．
40 分xd1 登e1＋0－1
Here is a well－known example，by another of the great champions，on the theme of shutting a piece out of play．In this case，a single piece is targeted，and the restriction is made possible by the pawn－structure．

## Winter－Capablanca <br> Hastings 1919

 0－0 0－0 6 鼻xc6 dxc6 7 d3 鼻d6 8 鼻g5 h6 9椇h4 c5 10 d $\mathrm{d} 5 \mathrm{~g} 5!$ ！（ $D$ ）

Black is playing against the bishop．

 14 栲xf3嵱xf 15 gxf3 f6 16 皃g2

In effect，White is playing a piece down．The bishop on g 3 is locked in，and can only be freed after a pawn sacrifice（ e h2，f4，and after ．．．exf4 White plays f3，宫g2 followed by 兽g1）．But this is time－consuming and will cost material．

The correct way for Black to realize his ad－ vantage is simple：attack on the queenside where
after the appropriate breakthrough and the open－ ing of the flank Black will be a piece up（the d6－ bishop）．

The general rule is：play on the other side of the board from the excluded piece．Simplifica－ tions should generally be in your favour since they will underline the absence of this piece．
 20 hxg 5 hxg 521 b3 c6 22 Eata b5 23 葛ha1 c4



We shall now take a piece－by－piece look at methods for domination，trapping，exclusion and restriction．

## Trapping the Bishop

The easiest way to exclude or trap a bishop is to build a pawn－barrier in its way．Do not forget that bishops are＇colour－blind＇．Do not be afraid that the pawns might be on the same colour squares as your own bishop．This bishop will still prosper if its main antagonist is neutral－ ized．

## Brener－V．Georgiev

Neuhausen 2007

 © d 410 h 3 c 611 De2？（ $D$ ）


Knowing the basic principles will help you score a lot of points，and enjoy your chess more．I can now exclude White＇s dark－squared bishop，just as in the classical example we saw above．



## 13．．．㟶e7

In order to exclude the bishop，Black needs to protect the e5－pawn in advance，and not to al－ low a freeing pawn－break by d 4 ．

14 宸d2 全b6！
The idea is to protect the e5－pawn with the bishop if necessary．
 $0-0-0$

After 18 dxe5 dxe5 19 0－0－0 and 20 we3
 and ．．．f6 in order to entrap the bishop on g 3 for－ ever．
 dxe5 22 axb5 axb5 23 亶d5？

White realizes that he is strategically lost and commits a tactical blunder．



The same method can be successfully ap－ plied when actually trapping a piece：


Malakhov－Jobava
European Clubs Cup，Kallithea 2008
$52 \mathrm{e} 6 \mathrm{f6} 53$ 亿xc8 そxc8 54 g 6 1－0

## Trapping the Knight

Tarrasch claimed that a knight near the comer is always a disgrace．While this is not always so， and indeed modern players are increasingly willing to put their knights on the edge and even near corners，care is needed，as such a knight lacks mobility and can quite easily become shut out of play or trapped．


V．Georgiev－Wornath<br>Bundesliga 2000／I

Black＇s knight is already in danger of exclu－ sion．I just need to keep it in the corner with a simple tactical trick：

## 

The pawn of e7 was hanging．



Having fixed Black＇s knight on a ridiculous square，I turn my eyes to the other side of the board．


 exd6 34 迫e3 g5 35 f5 1－0

Knights need stable positions，and advanced posts ideally．Without security they may be－ come an easy prey for practically any piece．


Leko－Ivanchuk
Dortmund 2008
Ivanchuk did not sense the danger and pro－ ceeded with his general plan：

## 23．．．．${ }^{\text {宏b5？}}$

The only move was 23 ．．．©e 4 ，to bring the knight back into its camp．

24 鼻xb5＋axb5 25 f3！（D）


White cuts off the knight＇s flight－squares， and will round it up later．

25．．．宸b6 26 लae1！
 h6 28 嶎 f 4 g 5 wins back the piece．White need not hurry，as the knight is frozen in place on g 5 ．



## Trapping the King

Excluding the king is an especially effective strategy in an endgame，since the king usually
needs to become an active piece and play a full role in the battle．


Tan Zhongyi－Stefanova
FIDE Knockout（Women），Elista 2004

## 33．．．a3＋！ 34 東a1

The king has to retreat into the corner，leav－ ing Black practically a piece ahead in the end－ game．
 Exc4

This exchange sacrifice is possible thanks to Black＇s dynamic advantage．The combined ef－ forts of a king，knight and passed pawn easily overpower a single rook．

38 bxc4 象xc4 39 h4 d3 40 f5 ©e4 41 fxg6
 0－1


S．Pereira－El Debs São Paulo 2000

White forces Black＇s king to the edge，where it is permanently exposed to a discovered check：






## Trapping the Rook

Rooks love open spaces，and this is a good rea－ son to keep the enemy rooks behind their own pawns．


Stefanova－Dworakowska
Tromse 2007

25 §c4！
The knight is heading for $b 6$ ，where it will shut in the rook forever．



The knight on b6 will cost Black at least a rook，one way or another，so White is effec－ tively an exchange ahead．
 $30 \mathrm{a} 5+$－葛 c 231 fxe4 芭xe2 32 笪b8 g5 33 亿c8




Rooks can be slain in their beds by a queen， especially if it has solid pawn support．


De Vreugt－Groffen
Dutch Team Ch 2007／8

## 

Black is actually exchanging his rook for the f6－pawn．

## Trapping the Queen

The queen may become very vulnerable if it joins the play too early．Due to its high value it cannot be exchanged for other pieces，and must flee whenever attacked．That＇s why as novices we are advised to develop our other pieces first．


Romero－J．Polgar
Italian Team Ch，Arvier 2008

Black had spent too many moves in the open－ ing moving her queen，and now it becomes a target．

14 Qh3
White is developing his pieces with gain of tempi．

## 14．．．g6

 16 h 4 h 617 h 5 the queen is trapped．

The queen is trapped in mid－board．This of－ ten happens if there are many pieces left on the board．White comfortably won later．

Queens also hate closed spaces，since they cannot show their full potential and are easy prey for the lower－rated pieces．


Figura－Pruijssers
Bundesliga 2008／9

## 21 d2！

Now Black loses material．
21．．．0e5？ 22 －b1 1－0



Doettling－D．Gross
Bundesliga 2007／8

Black has just played 35．．．©d5－b3？，closing off his queen＇s emergency exit，and this will cost him dear．

## 36 訔a1！

White takes the dark squares away from the black queen，and will now trap it．

36．．．全d5 37 㟶b2 皃f7

 42 余c4＋－White also wins．

38 点d3！
The queen is successfully surrounded，and the last finesse will be to attack it with the knight．

38．．．0d7
38．．．g4 39 蒌c3 gxf3 $40 \mathrm{~g} 4+-$ with the idea 9 di ．


## Exercises



Trap an enemy piece！


Limitation followed by trapping．


A piece has strayed too far from its own camp.


There's no need for a hint here!


Cut off the black queen's way out.


This is similar to the previous one.

Decoy in order to block.


Simple chess is the best.

## 21 Practice Makes Perfect

As we said at the beginning of the book, nothing can substitute for your own work on tactics. Regularly solving tactical positions will help you to understand the mechanisms described in the book, and assist the subconscious mind in absorbing many patterns and themes. It will also keep you in good shape for your competitive games. Before a tournament, we recommend you double the time you spend tackling tactical exercises in order to get into your optimal chess form.

Every time when you see a diagram on a sheet of paper, spend some time to find the solution; let this become a useful habit of yours. Another useful method for tactical improvement is to follow the games of the great tacticians, such as Mikhail Tal, Garry Kasparov, Veselin Topalov, Alexander Morozevich, Alexei Shirov, Emil Sutovsky amongst many others. This will help you discover new horizons in tactical art, and fully appreciate the beauty in chess.

A final tip: do not be afraid to sacrifice material. You will learn more from losing a chess game with honour than you will from gaining a couple of Elo points with a chicken-hearted draw offer. Remember, we are not slaves of our ratings.

In the following fifty exercises, you are told only who is to move. You must decide for yourself if you should be looking for a win or a draw, or just trying to secure a useful advantage. Like in a real game, there are also no clues about what tactical themes the position may feature. By this stage of the book you now have all the tools you need to work that out for yourself!





17


19












## Solutions

## Chapter 1

1）

Nevanlinna－Sepp<br>Jyväskylä 1993

16．．．d4！
Black forces his opponent into a dreadful pin．



18．．．醍g4！
Precisely here，this move creates an addi－ tional pin，puts more pressure on the pinned bishop and prevents 葛dl ideas．What more could one ask of a single move？
蔦fd8：

Black has won an exchange，and with precise play converts it into a full point．







## 2）Nguyen Huynh Minh－Macak Budapest 2008

18 9xe5
This is easy．White wins a pawn due to the pin．

18．．．罯f6

You had to foresee this counterpin，and see what follows：

Black is completely tied up，蔦c7 is coming， and $21 \ldots 8 \mathrm{~d} 7$ is simply bad due to 22 䓝xd6＋． This is why he decided to throw in the towel．

## 3）

## Narančić－Bistrić Bosnian Team Ch，Neum 2008

No．
18．．． $9 \times 4$ ？
Greed is usually punished，especially in chess．The knight walks into a pin，which White can exploit by simple means．He piles on as much pressure as he can，and at some point Black＇s defence will crack，since his queen is in front of his army（minor forces should protect first，remember？），which leaves him no chances in further exchanges．

19 窒f1
200 c 4 followed by 21 苞xa4 is the threat．

Adding a rook to the attack．
21．．． 0 c 8
The knight will provide support．
22 盛ba1 0 cb6 23 ct
With two decisive ideas to break the defence： to add the knight by $0 \mathrm{~d} 2-\mathrm{bl}-\mathrm{c} 3$ ，or the bishop via 惫e2－d1．Black is helpless．
 1－0

4）Kurnosov－Dzhumaev
Agzamov Memorial，Tashkent 2008
13 学xe6＋！fxe6

14 dxe6！墨g7
Unfortunately Black has no time to capture


15 exd7＋1－0
5）
Tatai－Vancini
Italian Ch，Chianciano 1989


The bishop defends the h5－square，but after White＇s reply，the black position collapses．

6）
Wade－Short
Staunton Memorial，London 2008



So far it was easy，but Black had to foresee how he could attack the pinned knight once more．

## 41．．．睍d6！

Such backward moves are notoriously hard to spot，especially in advance．But if we are looking for ways to put additional pressure on the pinned piece，the solution should come rela－ tively easily．

42 羔ha1
The point is that after 42 䍙b3 置b4！White loses both his knights due to a double attack： 43


42．．．直b4！－＋
Anyway！Naturally，Black prefers to win a whole knight rather than an exchange．

Black is winning．The rest is pure technique．




7）

## Sitnikov－An．Bykhovsky

Elkana 2007
41．．．寞 $x d 5$ ！
Active defence is the only chance．Black abandons the rook，even though he loses it with check，but creates a drawing mechanism．Pas－ sive defence is doomed：41．．．W⿳亠丷厂彡心㇒日，does not work，since White has an additional attacker： 42 b5＋－．



Black has lost a rook，but activated his queen to the maximum．

44．．．酸e4！ 45 参 1


$1 / 2-1 / 2$
Here the players agreed a draw，with 45 ．．．f $2+$
 ish．

## 8）Pruess－Ippolito

USA Ch，Tulsa 2008
20 ©xf7！
Excellent．White will coordinate his rooks and bishops and develop his initiative without any risk．

20．．．．巴xf7 $21 \mathrm{~h} 4!\mathrm{g} 5$（ $D$ ）
The only move．After 21．．． Qb $^{2} 22$ 置xf7＋皃xf7 $23 \mathrm{~g} 5 \pm$ White emerges an exchange up．


## 22 hxg5！

22 曾xf6！？is another way to continue the at－ tack．White gets rid of the defender，and substi－ tutes his attacking rook with the one from al． After $22 \ldots 0 \times f 623$ 酋fl he wins at least a pawn
in all lines；e．g．，23．．．b5 24 亶xf7＋皃xf7 25
 26 \＆xf6．Still，the method he chooses is prefer－ able，since it is much harder for his opponent to defend with more pieces left on the board．

## 22．．．hxg5 23 㽞f5！

More pressure on the pinned piece！
23．．．a5？！
Black crumbles under the pressure．But even after 23 ．．．皃f8！（relatively best） 24 复xf7（24

 25 是xg5 White has a rook and a pawn for two knights，is much better developed，and will most likely create another unpleasant pin．

## 

24．．．a4 25 登xg5＋（before exchanging the bishop for the rook，White digests a small




Pinning again．White has a decisive material and positional advantage．



## Chapter 2

1）
Brkíc－Andonov
Porto San Giorgio 2007
34 羔 d 7 ！1－0

2）
Olszewski－S．Savchenko
Cappelle la Grande 2008

220 xdl 断e2\＃．
22．．．．峟f1\＃（0－1）

3）

> Delgado - Llorente
> Bayamo 2000

## 1 宜h6！

This excellent move deflects the pawn，and in addition opens the g －file for the rook．

1．．．gxh6




## 4）

## Inants－Batsanin

Russian Team Ch，Dagomys 2008
22．．． 0 d 5 ！
Black exploits both factors and creates un－ bearable pressure on White＇s position．The knight is untouchable，so White has no good options．

## 

## 5）

## Tiviakov－Le Quang <br> Moscow 2008

False！This is what White was aiming for， but he missed that Black＇s queen can deflect a rook before making its exit from the board．

22．．．䠽e5！ 23 曹c1
 0 xh6 both White＇s rook and knight are hang－
 is a nice try，but also fails： 23 ．．．${ }^{W} \times \mathrm{Wg} 724 \mathrm{xg} 7$
 wins．

## 23．．．漌 h ！

The queen retreats with gain of tempo，creat－ ing a double attack．It is all over for White now．

## 24 h 3 fxe6 25 苞xe6

After 25 hxg 4 ，Black can choose between
 in both cases．
客f1

6）Markus－Bologan
Bosnian Team Ch，Neum 2008
By deflecting the main defender：

White＇s queen enters the battle，and now ei－ ther f 7 is doomed，or the queen will reach g 7 via f5．Note that the black queen is too far away from the main theatre，and White＇s pieces are all superior to their black counterparts．

45．．．e3＋
 leads to mate on g 7 ．

48．．．e2 49 凿xf8＋家xf8 50 d 7 ．



7）

## Shirov－Ivanchuk

Foros 2008
．．．then the f3－pawn will be under attack，and White＇s defences will be in ruins．This can be achieved with a study－like deflection which also disrupts the cooperation between the white pieces．

32．．．关d3！！ 33 亿xd3
This is forced．
 36 高h2 鲁xe2＋0－1

White＇s king cannot survive after 37 多g1
部h7．

8）

## Toczek－Wozniak

Poland 1999
1邑xh7！！宴xh7（D）


2 矣b6！
The main defender，as usual，is the queen． After its deflection，the idea behind White＇s first move becomes clear．

3．．．皃h6 allows mate in two： 4 炭h2＋象xg5 5


The only move．Both 6 ．．造xe5 7 寞xg6 fxg6
 mate．
缶h8＋！1－0

## Chapter 3

1）
G．Jones－Hasan
Hastings 2007／8

32 造a3＋！1－0

## 2）$\quad$ Flindt－Bulski

Politiken Cup，Elsinore 2008
22．．．管 $\mathrm{e} 1+$ ！0－1
3）Wang Puchen－Bui Vinh
Budapest 2008
42．．．${ }^{\text {国 }} \mathbf{x f}$ 2！0－1

4）
Gorovykh－Shimanov
St Petersburg 2008
And a very important one．This is the queen， and after it is deflected away，Black＇s king is hunted down on the queenside．



## 5）

## K．Stein－Movsesian

European Clubs Cup，Panormo 2001
The rook must protect h3，and so can be overloaded：

White is facing an impossible choice，either
 losing a whole rook in case of 37 f 3 㥪xh1． Therefore．．．

0－1
6）
Akobian－Onishchuk
Philadelphia（blitz） 2002
White opens the f－file to force Black to de－ fend his rook．

## 1 当xg5！fxg5

And now he enjoys the overload created：
2 紧xc7！！©d7

3 隠xd7！1－0

7）
A．Manvelian（end of study）
1st Prize，Zadachy i Etiudy， 1997


## 8） <br> G．Singh－Harikrishna <br> Kolkata 2001



This natural move is a fatal error，as White neglects his back rank．

White should play either 37 We4，safely neu－ tralizing the danger and claiming a modest ad－


分e $2+39$ 홍h 1 岂 740 公e 4 with an overwhelm－ ing attack．

Now Black finds a killing shot：
37．．．是d4＋！0－1
White resigned in view of： 38 恶xd4 菐el\＃；


## Chapter 4

1）<br>Knott－S．Haslinger<br>Hastings 2007／8

48．．．．${ }^{\text {en }} 4$ ！
Decoying the king into a promotion check．

2）
C．Horvath－Brnas
Croatia Cup，Pula 2001
23 e6！暟xe6 24 鼻c4 1－0
The queen is trapped．
3） Dudzinski－Mielczarski Ustron 2008


28 幅h5＋

1－0

4）
H．Hunt－Petrenko Calvia（Women＇s Olympiad） 2004
White first interposes on the b－file．



Now she drags her opponent＇s rook close to her king to escape from the perpetual check：



## 5）

De Jong－L．Johannessen
European Clubs Cup，Kemer 2007



6）

## H．Rinck

Deutsche Schachzeitung， 1903
With simple moves White first destroys an important pawn，then chases the queen to a bad square，traps and finally wins it．The queen has the powers of both bishop and rook，but in this study the combined efforts of these two indi－ vidual pieces prove of greater value：

## 

 main line．

## 



White＇s skewer wins Black＇s queen and the game．

## 7）Corrales Jimenez－Hungaski <br> World Junior Ch，Erevan 2007

## 30 בuc7！

Decoying the queen onto a mined square．
30．．．曹xc7
Black lacks time to take the queen： $30 .$. ．$x$ xh 31 罢fxf7＋皃g8（31．．．名f8 33 算xh7。

## 

The only move since 31 ．．．曾e8 allows mate


## 32 耪xc7

White has won back the sacrificed piece and emerged two pawns ahead．He was able to capi－ talize on his material advantage：





## 8）V．Petkov－Sanchez Guirado

 Collado Villalba 2008


Black＇s moves are all forced；otherwise he loses material．



And now comes the most pleasant moment in the combination－a silent deadly move．

29 数a2！
As we said before－it doesn＇t take many pieces to mate a lone king out in the open．


## Chapter 5

## 1）Wehner－A．Rotstein

German Ch，Bad Wörishofen 2008
In principle it was a good idea，but there is a major tactical flaw here：

12．．． 2 eg4！ 13 fxg4 $0 x 4^{0-1}$
（The initial moves were 1 e 4 c5 2 ）ff e6 3




## 2） <br> Alexandrov－Danin <br> Minsk 2006

White＇s king and rook are situated on the same diagonal，so line clearance should spring to mind！

24．．． $0 x$ x 5 ！
Black is an exchange down，but makes use of the insecure position of the opponent＇s king as well as a simple geometrical motif．

25 exd5 膤b6＋
Double attack．
26 宵 e 1 嵝xa7
The tables have turned．Now Black is a healthy pawn up and has a decisive attack．

27 h5 数e3
Threatening a discovered attack．
28 觡d1 c3 0－1

## 3）

## Carron－Nemet

Swiss Ch，Silvaplana 2003
The first move is quite obvious：Black anni－ hilates an important defender and opens the long diagonal．

21．．．Exf3！（D）


However，White has a zwischenzug：

22 羑xc4
It was important to see this detail in advance， and to have foreseen the brilliant finish：

22．．．e 3 ！！0－1
4）
Tiviakov－Ponomariov
FIDE Knockout，Moscow 2001

5）Aronian－Karpov
Hoogeveen 2003
27 念 e 7 （（D）


White opens the d－file for his rooks，takes away the d7－square from his opponent＇s knights， and breaks open Black＇s shelter on the kingside．




## 6）

## Esquivel－Gongora

Cuba 2002
A double attack deflects Black＇s blockading piece：



3 d7 1－0
The knights are too clumsy to stop a passed pawn that is right next to them．

7）

## An．Perez－Ordonez <br> Cuba 2003

1 皆h3！食xe4
After $1 \ldots$ ．．．h6 2 Exd6 White threatens to take on h6 with the rook，and 2．．．f6 3 峌d1 promises White a solid pawn and a winning position． Nevertheless，after the text－move it looks as if the attack has ended．However．．．

## 2 貝d5！

This double attack aims to deflect Black＇s defender of h 7 ．

2．．．寊g6！？
A clever move，but insufficient to save the game．

3 曹xg6！fxg6 4 筫xh7＋！1－0
Facing 4．．．㹸xh7 5 皆h4\＃，Black threw in the towel．

## 8）Y．Perez－L．Martinez（variation）

Cuba 2004
By decoying the king into a discovered at－ tack，Black bags a mighty trophy－the white queen：

And since he can operate with check，before capturing the queen，Black wins two minor pieces for a rook thanks to an overload：
解e1 色xa4－＋

## Chapter 6

1）

## Fedorov－Lastin

Voronezh 2007

Black realized his material advantage：
29 并3 0 g4 30 分f4




 $0-1$

## 2）M．Makarov－Ibragimov <br> Russian Ch，Samara 2000

It took only one move for the Russian GM to deal with his colleague：

22 学 c ！1－0


## 3）

Praznik－Stojanović
Bled 2008
Not at all：
28 Exf6＋！1－0
White frees a square for a fork，and opens a line for the remaining rook．Thanks to that， Black cannot protect his e8－rook．

4）
Fedorowicz－Vaganian
Reykjavik（Summit） 1990

## 24 胃 $h 8+$ ！1－0

This decoys Black＇s king into the corner as
 Qxf7＋

5）

## Stojanović－Dumpor

Bosnian Team Ch，Neum 2008
First Black advances his knight：

40 管h $h$ does not help either due to 40 ．．．幽e6 with the decisive threat of 41 ．．．斯h3\＃．


And now comes the rook：

## 40．．．． $\mathrm{B} \mathrm{b} 1+!$ 0－1

A beautiful deflection．Now three different forks are possible： 41 宫g 2 気 $1+, 41$ 宫e 2 名d4＋


## 6）

Short－Timman
Staunton Memorial，London 2008
The correct solution is 19 d $6!$ ！cxd6（or


Instead there followed 19 㨏b3？嵝xb3 20 axb3 岶c8 21 発xa7 and while White was still better，the win is not easy at all，and later Short even lost on time．

## 7）

P．Nikolić－Bindrich
European Ch，Plovdiv 2008
Answer B is correct．
49．．．仓f3＋？
When going for a combination，we must never forget our opponent＇s resources，no mat－ ter how ridiculous they may look．

50 曹xf3！
Black was obviously counting on 50 \％xf3？

edge for Black．However，he forgot that White may take the knight with another piece．No wonder－this type of psychological failing is common even in the practice of experienced grandmasters．Most people simplify their cal－ culation by excluding the＇unnecessary＇lines．

1－0
After 50 ．．．息xf3 White wins back the queen thanks to the fork 51 气e $6+$ 象e 752 xg5 and emerges a piece ahead．

## 8）F．Chin－Van Weersel <br> British League（4NCL）2007／8

In the game White hurried to perform a study－like shot：

## 25 绉e6？

However，this appears to be enough only for perpetual check．He needed to deflect Black＇s queen away from the vital e7－square instead by
 is that after 26．．．fxe6 27 甾xg7＋突h8 28 䍙h7＋告g8，the e7－square is not protected and so there follows 29 气e7\＃） 27 分e7＋皃h728 $0 \times 66$ fxe6 29 亿xf8＋官g8 30 亿xe6＋－
留g7＋果h829 号h7＋1／2－1／2

## Chapter 7

1）
I．Sokolov－OII
Pärnu 1996
White only needs to decoy the enemy king onto a mined square：

 th6 22 h3 1－0

## 2）$\quad$ Cmilyte－Borić

European Clubs Cup（women），Kallithea 2008
White found a beautiful win：
23 Qxc6！bxc6
23．．．定xal 240 d 8 ！
24 㗊d7！1－0


## 3）Shoker－A．Hernandez Muñoz Malaga 2008

White＇s knight prevents him from delivering a decisive discovered check．The bl－h7 diago－ nal must be cleared！

26 988
26．．．．．．xf8 27 全e4＋．

## 4）

Briscoe－Marlow
British League（4NCL）2007／8
Black is far behind in development．White must not give him time to finish it．



5）Efremov－Soloviev
corr． 2004

 doubles his rooks on the seventh rank） 4 登 $\mathrm{d} 7+$ ！果xd75 f6＋党xe8 $6 \mathrm{fxg} 7+-$ ．

## 3 f6＋！1－0

Black resigned，spotting the line $3 \ldots$ ．．．．．axe 84 fxg7筸xdl＋5道xdl，when nothing can prevent the rebirth of White＇s queen．

## 6）Čabrilo－Matović

Yugoslav Team Ch，Vrnjačka Banja 1999
For a successful discovered attack，White needs to clear a line，and decoy the enemy king．

Not 37 置d3＋？？f5－＋．



## 7）Alexandrova－Chorvatova

Hlohovec 1996
Yes，this was an easy nut to crack：

8）
Negi－Grivas
Wijk aan Zee 2008
The first move is obvious：White takes a pawn thanks to the discovered attack，but will drop his proud knight on e5．Still，destroying Black＇s castled position should have encour－ aged you to press on with your analysis of this line．

20 寔xg6！㥪xe521貝xh7＋！分xh7



22 血f4＋
And not 22 買 $\mathrm{f} 6+? ?$ ，when the attacking piece remains unprotected and it is Black who wins



Black has enough material for the moment， but White has additional prey in his sights：



## Chapter 8

1）
Davies－Dive
Wrexham 1994

33 兑 $88+$ and 34 宸 $g 6 \#$ will follow．

## 2）Lujan－Tkeshelashvili

Stockholm（rapid） 2008

Funnily enough，the black queen is trapped！

## 3）Skembris－Timman

Match（game 1），Corfu 1993
25 ©xe6！1－0
$25 . .$. fxe6 26 咢b7 and mate is unavoidable．
4）

## Volokitin－Nanu

European Ch，Plovdiv 2008
31 苗xh6＋！寫g8
In case of $31 \ldots$ ．．．${ }^{\text {s．}} \times$ xh6 the king is decoyed in front of its pieces，and White mates thanks to the vacant h3－square for his queen： 32 単h3＋皃g6 33 断h5 \＃．

32 訔h3 蕽c7 33 訔h4 1－0
5）

## Gleizerov－Alavkin

Kaluga 2003
23 数f6！
A multi－purpose move．It breaks up Black＇s pawn－shield，threatens mate，and frees a line for the rook to finish the job．

1－0

6）

Nayer－Ftačnik<br>Bundesliga 2007／8

18 ） 5 ！
With this beautiful blow White opens the d－ file towards the king and with energetic play soon mates it． 19 gf7\＃is the threat．

## 18．．．fxe5

In case of 18 ．．．．彑h7 above everything else White can win a rook using a knight fork： 19


## 19 dxe5

Black now tries to close the d－file，but White responds by removing all the bishop＇s defend－ ers．
笪xd5＋！1－0


## 7）

Jelica－Lujan
Rijeka 2008

## 29．．．．$\times x 55$

This piece cannot play a major role in the at－ tack，but the queen will make grateful use of the square it has vacated．

## 30 exf5

30 皆xf5 $44 \#$ ；it would have been wiser for White to play on a pawn down．
 33 gxh 3 笪 g 1 \＃

## Lovkov－Siugirov

Russian Junior Ch，St Petersburg 2008
27．．． $0 \times \mathrm{xb} 3$ 28 28
 queen．

## 28．．．We W ！0－1

This is also a double attack： 29 幽d2 ${ }^{W} \mathrm{Xg} 4$ or


## Chapter 9

## 1）Sergienko－Rustemov

Russian Ch，Samara 2000
39．．．崮h2＋！0－1
A variation on the standard smothered mate follows： 40 vh2 2 g3\＃．

2）

## Casper－Brener

Bundesliga 2007／8
27 峟 $97+$ ！1－0
White decoys the rook to g 7 where it closes off the black king＇s exit． $27 \ldots$ ．．．${ }^{\boldsymbol{E}} \mathrm{xg} 728$ ff6＋


## 3）Li Shilong－Wang Yue

Chinese Ch．Wuxi 2006
33．．．b3！
Black blocks the diagonal，and so destroys the defensive mechanism $33 \ldots .{ }^{2}$ d8 34 鼻a4．
34 axb3 2 d 835 b4 世xc6 0－1

## 4）Nayer－Nepomniashchy Moscow 2006

Black could have won on the spot had he have seen an unusual smothered mate idea， combined with decoy：31．．．g4！ 32 䊦3 3 and now comes the amazing $32 \ldots . . \left\lvert\, \frac{4}{\text { wit }} \mathrm{f} 1+!\right.$ ！．White is
 ©e2\＃．

In the game he played 31．．． U b5？and later lost．

5）
Geirnaert－Pel Groningen 2008
Of course not！
$55 .$. 笪 $5 \mathrm{~g} 7 ?$ ？
My（DB）good friend Bonno Pel was very up－ set about this mistake after the game：＂I saw this position from miles and miles away，but then in time－trouble something made me move my rook away．．．＂After some neutral move like 55．．．\＆e7
 0．xg $5 \times \mathrm{Eg} 5$ it is a simple fortress thanks to the blockade．White cannot improve his position．



White got the upper hand and later won．

## 6）Rafizadeh－L．Truong <br> Australian Under－18 Ch，Canberra 2001 <br> 13 迻xg7！！

White decoys the rook to a very bad square where it blocks the king．Black cannot prevent a discovered attack now．

## 

寊 h 6 ＋－


## 7） Kantsler－Malisov <br> Modein 2000

White is seeking a perpetual by blocking off the king＇s escape－route，and this proved success－ ful in the game after 1．．．fxg5？ 2 盢h7＋！幏xh7 3
 Wivf $7+1 / 2-1 / 2.1 .$. Qlf5 $^{2}$ ？is also met by 2 苗h $7+$ ！（ 2

宸c8－＋）4．．．曾h7 5 曾f7＋，with a draw，while Black can even lose：1．．．峜e6？？ 2 gxf6＋竄g8


1．．． as 2 h h ？allows $2 . . . \mathrm{\omega}$ 产xf3＋，and otherwise White has nothing；e．g．， 2 gxf6 5 ．

## 8）Vila Gazquez－Pogorelov <br> Linares（open） 2005

1．．．h2＋！ 2 果xh2 血f3！
The key move．The bishop blocks the f－ pawn，thus creating a mating－net，and controls the d 1 －square，not permitting White to exchange rooks．Black now needs to get to the h －file somehow．

## 3 觉fe1

This loses at once，but other defences also fail，as shown by Pogorelov：


b） 3 g 5 ！？f5 and now：
 －＋．
b2） $4 \mathrm{~g} 4 \mathrm{f} 4(4 \mathrm{C}$ 宣xg5！？has the point 5 c 6

 ．．．̈dh8．

罜h2！！，when White turns the tables in his fa－





3．．．巴d8！ 4 自xd8 Exd8 0－1

## Chapter 10

1）
Claverie－Lemos
Fischer Memorial， Villa Martelli 2008
 34 홀xf1 岂a1＋0－1

## 2）

Shaked－Cherniaev
New York 1993
．．．and it hinders White＇s access to the sev－ enth rank，and must be destroyed：

## 

Now a subtle queen manoeuvre forces resig－ nation：

## 3）

P．Carlsson－Braun
Wijk aan Zee 2008
We hope you noticed that Black has left his king in the centre．Two of its defenders can be removed（destroyed or deflected），and the last one can be blocked．

Mate is threatened on f7 and d8，and Black can＇t stop both．
绾b1 1－0

4） $\begin{aligned} & \text { Ushenina－Dvoirys } \\ & \text { Moscow } 2008\end{aligned}$
White＇s bishops and queen are perfectly placed，and Black is holding his position to－ gether thanks only to his excellent knight．It should be annihilated by a piece that isn＇t play－ ing a leading role in the attack：

26 登 e 5
 might look attractive if you miss the solution， but after 28．．．${ }^{\text {是e2！}}$ ！the tables will turn in Black＇s favour（Aagaard）．

1－0
Black resigned，as after 26．．．g6 27 胃xf5 exf5 28 数d4 he is mated．

5）

## Afek－Gershaev

Israel 1999
White has a series of three violent sacrifices that remove two defenders and open a vital di－ agonal：



复xe6＋＋－

## 6） <br> J．Caceres－Nogueiras <br> Montreal（open） 2002

The d4－bishop is too strong to be left on the board．It both pins the white knight and defends on the long diagonal．After its removal，the dark squares in Black＇s camp will be indefensible．

## 

White already has two pawns for the ex－ change，and his opponent cannot return the ex－






## 7）Handke－H．Hernandez

Havana 2003
And without a bishop to defend them，Black＇s days are numbered．

## 



 + ．

25 畳e1！1－0
25．．． $\mathrm{e} x \mathrm{xd} 626$ 总e8\＃．
8）
Bojković－J．Houska
Belgrade（women） 2008
21 宣xg7！崽xg7
There is no time for $21 \ldots$ 憲xf3？ 22 懒h6．
22 2h5＋옵f8
22．．．t．g．g6 23 卛f4＋－

White has annihilated the pawn－shield and now threatens various tactical strikes．Her posi－ tion is winning．

24．．．

断xb6 34 貝c6 1－0

## Chapter 11

1）Gubaydulin－Kasyan
Uzbek Ch，Tashkent 2008
32．．．寒g2＋！
Unblocking the pawn，and clearing an im－ portant line．

0－1
 36 貃h3 挡g3\＃．

## 2）Morchiashvili－S．Novikov <br> European Ch，Plovdiv 2008

Black＇s own rook is hindering the pawn＇s dreams．So it is sacrificed：

45．．． E d2＋！
Much better than the simplistic 45．．．皆g2？ 46葛d7＋ the a－pawn．

46 氪xd2 a2 47 g 4 a1宸

The rook and the pawn were＇exchanged＇for a queen．
㲅 b 2 0－1

## 3）

L＇Ami－Spoelman
Wijk aan Zee 2008
Black wins an exchange：
35．．．2e3！ 36 亿b
He had seen the zwischenzug 36 fxe 3 c2！， gaining the decisive tempo．


## 4）Narciso Dublan－Krivoruchko

European Ch，Plovdiv 2008
The young Ukrainian GM Yuri Krivoruchko loudly announced his presence to the world at the 2008 European Championship，where he qualified for the World Cup．Here is one of his wins：

80．．．e1権！？0－1
The hasty $80 \ldots \mathrm{el}$ 㟶？would lead to a huge
 Wxe8 stalemate！

We should note that Black has several other ways to win，including the dramatic $80 \ldots$ ．．．${ }^{\omega} \mathrm{xf4+}$ $81 \mathrm{gxf4} \mathrm{e} 1 \mathrm{~W}+$ ，mating with checks，and the
 overloading the white queen．Your basic task here was to notice the stalemate defence and avoid it．

5）
Nijboer－Naumkin
Hoogeveen 2008
White finds a pretty way to use his passed pawn．

32．．．gxf6 33 甾g8＋甾xg8 34 fxg8腾\＃．
33 － $2 \times 7$ 1－0
6）
S．Williams－G．Jones
Bunratty 2008

But first Black should remove the defender of the back rank：

Now the breakthrough．
37 等 g 1
37 fxe3 f2．
37．．．鼻d4！
This is a precise move that keeps the pawns intact and creates a duo of passed pawns．

38 苟h 1 e2 39 挡d2 全xf2 40 a3
Black is not in a hurry now．He simply im－ proves his pieces before collecting the point．

身g4 0－1

## 7）

## R．Martin－R．Hernandez <br> Benasque 2000

．．．endgame！
1．．． $2 \times 6$ ！
The passive 1 ．．．．${ }^{\text {d }} \mathrm{f} 82$ bxa3 bxa3 3 gbl al－ lows White the initiative．

Many roads lead to Rome after 3 慧d2；for


5 bxa3 $2 x a 16$ 登xd6 0 c2－＋
After all the forced exchanges，the break－ through proves decisive：

5．．．b3！！0－1

## 8）Hendriks－Michalczak

Dieren 2008
Some moves earlier White sacrificed his queen in order to create a strong passed pawn． Now he carefully advances it，and creates addi－ tional passed pawns too．
$29 \mathbf{a 7}$ 募 $\mathbf{b} 7$（ $D$ ）


## 30 d6！

For the sake of promotion，White is ready to part with the bishop．He will，of course，gain some tempi in return．

30．．．．${ }^{\text {ex }} 4$
$30 \ldots . .631 \mathrm{~d} 7$ 曹d8 32 胃d1 forces Black to block the pawn with his most powerful piece． White wins thanks to the plan of b4－b5．


営xf4，when the rook will support the pawns， while advancing the third passed pawn by 35 e 5 is also good enough．
 a8榿1－0

## Chapter 12

## 1） <br> I．Gonzalez－Pulido <br> Havana 2001

## 1 眎e6＋！象h8

Black＇s problem is obvious after l．．．．．．xe6 2
 Q $\mathrm{g} 5+\mathrm{+}$ ．

2 崬xc8！1－0

## 2）

## Fressinet－Macieja

European Ch，Plovdiv 2008
Unfortunately，even the best－motivated posi－ tional moves are not always tactically sound． Here Black did not notice that his back rank might be in danger，obviously counting on his rooks being able to defend the vital e8－square． Sadly for him，one of them may be annihilated immediately，which simultaneously deflects the second one．．．

24 畨xa8！1－0


## 3）

## Sargisian－Skoberne

European Ch，Plovdiv 2008

And not 35 xh2？？，which gives Black a chance to withdraw his queen with gain of tempo，and win after $35 \ldots$ ．．㟶h $4+36$ 舁gl 営xa4．

## 35．．．量d6

 37 㟲e8\＃。

36 苞xd6 1－0

| 4） |  | Pruijssers－Kroeze |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | Dutch Club Ch 2008 |
|  |  | ＋！0－1 |
|  |  | $\mathrm{dl}+27$ 唈f1 |

5）
Zwanzger－Marković
Passau 1997
24．．．．

 won a piece，but for the moment all his pieces are hanging．However，the b4－pawn will have
 leaves Black winning，with two minor pieces for a rook）36．．．置xcl 37 蔮xf6 b3－＋．

## Chapter 13

## 1） <br> Bojkov－Delemarre <br> World Under－18 Ch，Szeged 1994

Back in 1994，stalemate did not seem an im－ portant concept to me．I knew that it sometimes happens to some poor guys，who are just too blind to foresee their opponent＇s silly threats． This was something that would never happen to me，I thought．And then I had to bite the bitter pill．My position is obviously winning，and I was wondering why on earth my opponent did not resign．

58 盖e7＋？
This awful move chases my opponent＇s king into a safety box．I saw the winning continua－
 61 昆a5．I later admitted to my trainer that the strategy of＂this wins as well＂does not always bear fruit．．．

## 58．．．宵f4 59 箅xe3

Now comes the shock．
59．．． m xf $2+1 / 2-1 / 2$
Black＇s king will be stalemated almost in the middle of the board．

## 2）

## Bojkov－Parker

World Under－18 Ch，Szeged 1994
Unfortunately this was not all．Two days later I had to face a strong player．I managed to outplay him，and this position arose．While I was thinking，my trainer，the colourful IM Stoyan Ivanov（unfortunately he passed away some years ago）saw the position and remarked to his colleagues：＂While there is still a pawn， there is no stalemate！＂However．．．

## 76 寝xa6？？

Again the same principle：depriving my op－ ponent of any chances，or rather trying to．．． However，chess is a game where the rules are often confronted with the exceptions．In our particular case the pawn on a6 is an irrelevance，
as it is not threatening to promote any time soon．Now Jonathan Parker saves himself using stalemate motifs．

## 76．．．We W ＋ 77 g 5

77 综h7 does not change anything，since after
 79 宸xe6 it is stalemate again．

## 77．．．㯎e6＋

I remember that I was desperately gazing at the position for some minutes，even wondering if I should play 78 gith 7 or 78 g 6 ．And finally，I took the queen．

78 寝xe6 ${ }^{1 / 2-1 / 2}$

## 3） <br> I．Goldin－Riabov <br> Moscow 1972

1 色d6＋！！
As usual we start the sacrificial policy with the weakest pieces．

1．．．對xd6
1．．．我a7？？leads to mate in three after 2 悲f7＋ while after $1 \ldots$ ．．．s8 2 凿c6 it is Black who needs to force a draw： $2 \ldots \mathrm{a} 2+3$ 家d1 $0 \mathrm{c} 3+=$ ．

In case of 3 ．．．${ }^{\circ}$ a6 White does not capture the
 sisc4．

## 4）

## Atakisi－V．Spasov

Turkish Team Competition 2008
In a severe time－scramble，White played 1


One can only guess what Umut Atakisi＇s feelings were when Vasil Spasov demonstrated


宽 $\mathbf{g 6 + !}$ ！，based on the same idea，is also suffi－ cient to draw．

## 5）

Fichtl－Hort
Czechoslovak Ch，Košice 1961

This pawn advance does not seem to bring Black any relief．Why does he not simply give up？

46．．．h5 47 臽f2 h4 48 置d6
Zugzwang？
48．．．寫h3！
No！Black has built a safety box！
$1 / 2-1 / 2$

6）
Y．Afek
Pfeiter Jubilee， 1981



5．．．音xg6 6 卽h8．

Stalemate．

## 7）

## E．Pogosiants

Shakhmaty v SSSR， 1981


 3．．．f2 4 Qf3 f1


## 8）

## Spoelman－Hebden

European Union Ch，Liverpool 2008
No，the talented Dutch player found a safety box and exploited it．
数g！臽e7 76 f5！



## 76．．．Eg8 77 筸h h

77 f6＋transposes and leads to a draw too： 77．．．．鼻xf6 78 果h7．


## Chapter 14

## 1） <br> Macieja－Simaček <br> Czech Team Ch 2004／5

41．．．Oe1 42 Od4
A clever try，but it does not bring White a whole point． 42 es $8+$ doesn＇t change anything：
 draw．
苞c8 $x$ xh $+1 / 2-1 / 2$

2）
Galkin－Liang Chong
Internet 2004
Yes，it is！White needs to save his skin：



Now the king must be exposed：

With a draw．

## 3）Saada－Alanić

French Team Ch，Lille 2005
Watching the decisive game of the match I realized that my team－mate Julien Saada could exchange everything at once and win the match

 \＆ f 3 ，drawing．

Unfortunately，he failed to see this option， chose 85 f5 instead，and it was only his luck that saved the half－point in the end．

4）Prusikhin－Buhmann
Griesheim 2003
26 Ёxc5！！
This bishop is protecting an important square．
26．．．${ }^{\text {exc }} 5$


 diate perpetual check．White now needs to find something more．

29 g．g6！
As we already know，deflection is also useful as a defensive method．
豈d8 $+1 / 2-1 / 2$

## 5）

## H．Lommer

L＇Italia Scacchistica， 1933
White constructs a drawing mechanism based on the discovered check：
 gid7

4．．．身e4 5 胃e7＋and Black＇s king may not step onto the f 6 －square due to the discovered at－ tack with 㖪e $1+$ ．



With a draw．
6）
Cao Sang－Acs
Budapest 2000
．．．and needs to profit from his activity imme－ diately．

31．．．象 $\mathbf{c}$ ！ 32 备 7 7＋
皆 $\times \mathrm{xa} 3+35$ 数 b 2 曾 $\mathrm{cxc} 3=$ ．

32．．．皆e7 33 f6＋

傢b2 笪cxc ${ }^{1 / 2}-1 / 2$

Perpetual check by ．．．曾ab3＋and ．．．量a3＋， etc．，will follow．

## 7）Galliamova－Korchnoi

Amsterdam（Ladies vs Veterans） 2001

## 34 曾xe6＋！fxe6

Alisa Galliamova now rushed with $\mathbf{3 5}$ 㗀 $7+$ ？
象d6－＋）36．．．

The correct line was given by Mark Taima－

凿c8＋我d6（37．．．



Moral：Sometimes the road to heaven may be very narrow，and every wrong step can be the $\sin$ that leaves us outside．

## 8）

G．Zakhodiakin
Shakhmaty v SSSR， 1981

Precisely here．All White＇s pieces are now in full harmony．

尊xe5 萝xe5

With a draw．

## Chapter 15

1）

## Kravtsiv－Sieciechowicz

Warsaw 2007
Alas，Black＇s light squares were blown open：

A forced mate is coming．
2）Khenkin－T．Søndergaard Esbjerg 2005
Black was definitely sorry that his rook had left the f－file：

13 思xf7＋！1－0


## 3）P．Cramling－Kovalevskaya

European Women＇s Ch，Plovdiv 2008
The pawn has a lot of energy left in it，and provides vital back－up to the assault on $f 7$ ．

26．．．旨df8 27 d 7 崽xd7 28 癷xd7 a5（28．．．g6 29 苞xa7） 29 h 5.

27 苞xf7 気h8 28 f3 g6 29 g4 h5 30 g5 寫f5





4）

## Valdes－J．Diaz

Cuba 2001
And it is possible because Black did not oc－ cupy the blockading square d 5 ．White now showed his trumps：


3 念h5！1－0



5）

## Čabrilo－Popović

Yugoslavia（rapid） 2004
．．．and it is the one in front of the king：

With the idea ${ }^{2} \mathrm{~g} 5$ ．
3．．．貝f6
In the event of $3 \ldots$ h6 White still plays 4 gg $5!$ hxg 5 and then opens the f－file by 5 f 4 ！g 4 $6 \mathrm{f} 5 \mathrm{~g} 57 \mathrm{f} 6+-$ ．
 1－0

6）Shirov－Korchnoi（variation）
Drammen 2004

Mate follows．

7）

## Asrian－Karasev

Russia Cup，St Petersburg 1997
21 㗊xf7！！韵xf
Or：21．．．exf7 22 装xd5＋－；21．．．dxc4 22
 Qd6 we7 26 業xa8＋



8）

## Sanduleac－Varadi <br> Szombathely 2003


The only move．Worse is $14 \ldots$ ．．．g8？ 15 出 $\mathrm{b} 3+$ d5 $16 \varepsilon^{2} \mathrm{xd} 5+-$

## 15 f4！

White＇s attack proves to be decisive．I hope that you foresaw most of the beautiful support－ ing lines．

15．．． Q $^{5}$
Or $15 \ldots$. c5 16 f5＋鼻xf5 17 exf5＋皃xf5 18 Qe6！，and now：




 dxe5（ $D$ ）

气d5\＃．


19 峛d3＋！e4
19．．．象g4 20 䁷h3\＃。
20 ©cxe4！鼻b4
Or：20．．．皃e5 21 真f4＋！晲xf4 22 気7！！家f5


 ©gf7\＃．

Black resigned in view of $22 \ldots$ ．．．g． 523 wisc 4


## Chapter 16

## 1）

## Short－Ye Jiangchuan

Taiyuan 2004
We can strike immediately：
27 彎 $\times h 7+$ ！1－0
White creates a discovered attack mecha－



## 2）S．B．Hansen－H．Olafsson

Reykjavik Zonal 1995
We can include the sleeping rook from hl：

20．．． hf6 loses to the double exchange on f6，while $20 \ldots .0 \times g 5$ is met by 21 hxg 5 ！．

3）

## Bellon－Ask

Rilton Cup，Stockholm 2007／8
21．．．量 $\mathbf{a} 2+$ ！
One rook is sacrificed，to allow the other one to deliver the decisive blow．


## 4）

Timofeev－Svidler
Russian Ch，Moscow 2008
An exchange of pieces and a rook sacrifice will have a similar effect：

18 㑒xf6！gxf6 19 笪 $x h 7+$ ！1－0
Black resigned because of 19．．．tish7 20嶿h3＋身g721宸g4＋（remember this stairway： White clears the road for his rook） 21 ．．．


5）
Kravtsiv－I．Popov

$$
\text { Lvov } 2006
$$


In an unusual way，the queen is sneaking to the h－file and h 7 －square．

16．．．cxb2＋17 㹸b1 气f6 18 訔h4＋气h5 19 gxh5 置h6 20 寰d4＋1－0

## 6）Van Haastert－Broekmeulen

Dutch Club Ch 2008

The first one，which blocks the f－pawn．
16．．．总h8 17 茑e1！
This is the most important move in the as－ sault．Black is not allowed to escape by ．．．稳g8．

17．．．畕e6
17．．．臬d7 is impossible due to 18 㟶xf7＋，
 + －


## 7）

## Amura－Ruan Lufei

Women＇s World Ch，Nalchik 2008
19．．． 0 xe5！ 20 fxe5 宣xe5 21 h 3
21 g 3 置xg 3 will clear both the g －and h －files， and the rook will be transferred via e3 to give mate．

Black breaks in and starts collecting mate－ rial．






8）Elianov－Van Wely
Russian Team Ch，Dagomys 2008
19 皿xh7！（D）


It must have been very painful for a top GM to suffer this heavy blow at such an early stage of the game．

19．．．$\triangle \mathbf{f 8}$




20 © ${ }^{2}$ d3
White has won an important pawn and con－ verted it easily into victory：

勾4270xg 1－0

## Chapter 17

1） $\begin{gathered}\text { Anand－Aronian } \\ \text { Morelia／Linares } 2008\end{gathered}$



2） Mitkov－Mikhailuk

Las Vegas 2007
And his king is too vulnerable．
17 鼻h6＋！冨h8

18 訔h4

## 3）Utiuganov－Konovalov

USSR 1950
Black uses a well－known pattern that involves a double check：

Yes，a weakened fianchetto can be exploited with a 㝠 + 分 combination．

## 4）

## Pogorelov－Diaz Castro

Dos Hermanas 2004
The bishop，for sure．In this example White gives mate in an unconventional way．

25 苞xg7＋！！宵xg7 26 㐭f6＋！！1－0
Black did not wish to see 26．．．家xf6（26．．．． 27 Wg 5 leads to a more standard finish） 27


## 5）Aveskulov－Averianov

Kharkov 2005
To make use of it，he must get his queen nearer the g 7 －square，or the h －file．

Or：35．．．gxf5 36 菅xh5＋雷g8 37 蒌h8\＃； 35．．．



## 6）

## Roiz－Kritz

Biel 2007
In order to destroy the fianchettoed bishop and get control over all the dark squares，White sacrifices a whole rook：



3．．．どh7
3．．．愛g8 4 崰h6＋－

## 4 契 5


宸xe5＋荨d7 11 宸 $7 \#$ \＃

## $4 . . . \mathrm{e} 5$ 息h5！




1－0
The game could finish like this： $5 \ldots \mathrm{~m} 86$



## 7）

 Kramnik－AnandAmber Rapid，Nice 2008
It is easy to discover the best move，even if it costs you a whole queen，if we remember which our main enemy is：

42．．．${ }_{\text {We }} \mathrm{f} 3!!$
The queen has to be taken，since it X －rays the hl－square and threatens mate by ．．．巴 $\mathrm{E} / \mathrm{l}+$ ． White gave one last check before resigning：

43 cxb7＋

## 8）Frois－L．Dominguez Lisbon 2000

No，Black can break open the fianchetto for－ mation by a rook sacrifice：

Now Black wins by force，but if White de－ clines the sacrifice，then Black has simply won a valuable pawn for nothing．

Black comes out on top in the desperado
苞xf3 17 exf3 bxc6 leaves Black a piece up）
 have enough for the exchange．

## 15．．．显xg3

Suddenly the black queen is frighteningly close to the white king．

## 16 㗊f1

In all lines Black makes full use of his queen， bishop and knights：
a） 16 誉xb7 息h3！（Black does not mind giv－ ing up a whole rook with a check！） 17 亿h4

b） 16 楼b4 寞h3 17 h 4 g5！wrecks White＇s defensive fortifications．




16．．．完h3 17 完h4
 20 等xf2 $0 \mathrm{~g} 4-+$ ．

17．．．） 0 0－1

## Chapter 18

## 1）

Z．Almasi－Navara
Reggio Emilia 2007／8
White decided to liquidate into a rook end－ game with two pawns more：

32 莫 $\mathbf{x f 7} 7$ ！蒀xf7
32．．．홍h8 33 真g6．


and White won later．Thus energy had trans－ formed into material．

## 2）

## M．Fuentes－J．Hernandez <br> Havana 2002

Then awaken him．The price is insignificant： only a pawn！

## 1 d5！exd5

苞xh5＋！gxh5 5 畄xh5＋＋－） 3 宸g3 and Black collapses．

## 2 完d4

Now that White has established this bishop on a dominant diagonal，nothing can save Black． The following beautiful lines are only a proof of something that we already know．

2．．．寓g8
Or：



 and wholly logical！



3）

## Danilov－A．Vajda

Romania 2004
We know that the light squares are vulnera－ ble，and we need to find a way to open lines：

1 蹋h5！韋g8
 2 㑒xf7＋！1－0
Black resigned in view of $2 \ldots$ ．． 8 xf（or the other way round： $2 \ldots$ ．．


## 4）

Yuzhakov－Frolianov
Khanty－Mansiisk 2007
Black decided to prevent White permanently from castling：

Black exchanges the main defender in his opponent＇s position，and keeps pounding on the light squares．
若 $\mathrm{e} 2+7$ 氧 $\mathrm{g} 3(D)$


If you have seen this far，I congratulate you． The end is near：

7．．．量xg2＋！ 8 象h4
 not protect both fl and g 2 ．

8．．．䙾xf 0 －1

## 5）

## E．Pogosiants

Shakhmatyv SSSR， 1981
Black will try to exchange the last remaining pawn，but in the process will have to place his pieces too awkwardly：

 and now 3．．．寞g8 allows White the shortcut 4 b5！？axb5 5 宽b4 and the knight will come round to mate，while after the waiting $3 \ldots$ 蝎f 1 White wins by 兾b6－a5 and ged4－c5－b6） 3 b5！宴xb54 45 and White wins．

6）
Ionica－Jianu
Bucharest 200I

Black＇s king needs to step in front of his army since $31 \ldots$ ．．． 32 宸xg7 宸e7 33 宴f7＋
 nets material for White．

32 岩f4！宸e7
 mate．

## 33 息f7＋1－0


$33 \mathrm{~h} 5+$ would have mated in four： $33 \ldots$ ．．． 8 xh 5


7）

## Moiseenko－Yuldachev

Turin Olympiad 2006
24．．． 0 e $2+$ ！
This temporary piece sacrifice leads to an op－ posite－coloured bishops position where Black is the more active side．

Black recovers the piece，and his attack proved to be decisive．


笪b1 0－1

8）

## Marin－De Vreugt <br> Tel Aviv 2000

It＇s all about the initiative！
34 2 xg7！（D）
After the primitive $340 x d 6$ ？曾b8，Black gains counterplay．


34．．．eme4
$34 \ldots . .6 \mathrm{sg} 7$ is met by two deadly blows： 35蕞h6＋！皃g8 36 紫xf6＋－．

The question is who is quicker．It should be the one who starts first，of course．
䙾h6＋！＋－。

If 36 ．．．w wal White wins in various ways： 37


 $40 \mathrm{~h} 4+$ ！＋－．

37 㟶e6＋
37 岩d8＋also wins．
 40 举f8＋1－0

## Chapter 19

1）

## Fridman－Wells

European Union Ch，Liverpool 2008
No．The d4－rook should switch to another file where it poses much more danger for Black：

24 寞xg7！1－0
24．．．啇xg725㫜g4＋．

## 2）Haba－Kachar <br> Pardubice 2004

1 黄 $\mathrm{xg} 7+$ ！1－0

亚xh6\＃．Both rooks found juicy lines to work on．
3）
C．Reyes－E．Estevez
Cuba 2005

White will use the open file to deliver mate or win material．

1 昌he7！
This move，restoring the coordination of all White＇s troops，proves decisive．

1．．． 0 xe7
1．．．曷xh8 2 笪1e6\＃．

 wis $4+$ and mate next move．


4 党e6 曾c8
4．．．㟶xe6 5 㟶xe6＋and Black also loses the g4－rook．

5 d 5 ！
Forcing the inevitable．
1－0
4） Gavrilov－Soloviov
St Petersburg 2005
Black opens both $g$－and h－files and delivers mate with a cunning manoeuvre by his queen：



## 5）

## Quesada－C．Diaz

Cuba 2000
White uses clearance to bring both the rooks and the bishops into the attack：

1．．．巴xf6 leads to a forced mate： 2 蒠xh7＋





2 血xh7＋！1－0
Black resigned in view of a line where the



## 6）Dzagnidze－Stefanova

## FIDE Knockout（Women），Elista 2004

Both black rooks are working on semi－open files，but it will be even better if they have an open file：

23．．． 0 e4！ 24 余xe4
 24．．．exd3！nets a pawn for Black．

Black has a large advantage thanks to the con－ trol of the only open file．She won convincingly：


刍e5 f6＋ 37 宵d4 f5 38 b5 cxb5 39 cxb5 当xe4＋




暍xh7＋皃g6 0－1

Bologan－Akopian
FIDE Grand Prix，Moscow 2002
49．．．．E．e3！！
After this nice tactical idea，based on both clearance and interference，White has no de－ fence．Note that 49 ．．． e b 3 is less effective in view of 50 峟c5，covering f2．
 53 h 4 《xh4 0－1

## 8）

## A．Graf－Gustafsson

German Ch，Altenkirchen 2005
．．．and finds a way to use it：
23．．．宣xh3！ 24 f4（ $D$ ）

 27 皃g1 尝g 3 －


24．．．鼻xg2＋！
Nevertheless．
25 曗xg2

我g1 品 6 0－1

## Chapter 20

## 1）

Shirov－Wang Hao
Russian Team Ch，Sochi 2009
23 告xh6！！1－0



## 2）

Dziuba－Dydyshko
Polanica Zdroj 2000
Black first shuts the queen out of the game， and wins material：

1．．．$\ \mathrm{~d} 2!$ ！ 2 曹 a 2
 exchange．

2．．．Exc13 3 xc1
White＇s position crumbles after 3 蔦xc1 b3 4


White＇s rook is trapped．

## 3） <br> Godena－Trent

European Union Ch，Liverpool 2008
It is the white queen that is the target：
26．．．真f7
The threat of a discovered attack forces deci－ sive material gains．
 30 b4 e4 0－1

## 4）Narančić－Leventić

 Bosnian Team Ch，Neum 2008The only piece that is in danger is the a6－ rook，and White＇s own knight has just cut off its retreat．

21．．． $0^{2}$ cb4 22 cxb4 $9 x b 423$ g4 自xd3 24
字g1 气xa6 0－1

5）
V．Milov－V．Meijers
Zwolle 2003
Black＇s queen has access to e4，and this square should be blocked．

38 e4！！dxe4
38．．． $\mathrm{d} 639 \mathrm{e} 5 \mathrm{C} 4+$ gives White a chance to create a strong passed pawn： 40 苞xe4 dxe4 41 exf6 exd 32 f7＋－．

In case of the more resilient 38 ．．．．

 traps the queen．

39 息xf7！
An important gain of time，giving Black no respite to free his queen．

Or： 40 ．．．． 43 眃xf3 gxf3 44 官f4＋－； 40 ．．．量xe5 41 dxe 5
 ＋－．

## 41 象e3！

Now g 1 is inevitable．Not at once 41 畳 g 1 ？ due to $41 \ldots$ e3 + ．

and White soon won．

## 6）Grishchuk－Sutovsky

European Team Ch，Plovdiv 2003
White sets up his opponent＇s pieces for some punishing blows：
$21 \mathrm{f6}$ ！定xf6 22 e5 要g5
22．．．害g7 23 㟶e4 is a double attack against both the queen and the b7－pawn．If Black drops that pawn he will also lose his a6－knight．

There follows g 4 ．

## 7）

## D．Petrov

Sovietsky Shakhmatny Etiudy， 1955
White gives up both his minor pieces，but traps the black rook in return：

1 罢2！
 $=$ ．

1．．．


White wins．

## 8） <br> B．Maksimović－Bojkov <br> Varna 2002

A series of exchanges granted Black time to trap the white knight on the edge of the board：



With two mighty bishops，and White＇s pieces very short of moves，Black＇s task is very pleas－ ant．Later White even sacrificed the poor knight but this did not save him．

39 g 4 皃f8 40 我g3 我e7 $41 \mathrm{h4}$ 皃d6 $42 \mathrm{h5}$



 0－1

## Chapter 21

1） Todorović－Kraai
Budapest 2003
White will obviously clear the g －file for his rook．In doing so he must foresee what to do against Black＇s only defensive resource－bring－ ing his own rook to the g－file．

26 保！
The best place for the knight．It will now co－ operate perfectly with the queen．

## 26．．．Еg8 27 耪 $\mathrm{h} 7+!$ ！

The easiest way：White decoys the king into a mate in two．

However，the simple 27 若g8＋should also


 ff6 and mate is inevitable．This is no surprise， since neither of the black pieces can help their king．

## 1－0



## 2）

## An．Rodriguez－Soto <br> Callao 2007

All the white pieces are fully active，and it is no wonder that he finds a decisive way to break in：

## 24 Eg6！1－0

It is forced mate after $24 \ldots$ ．．fxg6 25 気xh6＋ gxh6 26 曹xh6\＃．

3）

## Gyimesi－Bistrić

Bosnian Team Ch，Neum 2008
The situation is similar to the previous one． Black king lacks defenders，while White＇s at－ tacking forces are much superior．There must be a forced win！

25 遭xh7＋！1－0
 forced mate．

## 4）

## J．Polgar－Karpov

Hoogeveen 2003
25 自xh7＋！
Lasker＇s idea in action．By sacrificing both bishops，White opens up her opponent＇s king， enabling her major pieces to give mate．

26．．．音g8 27 會xg 7 宵xg 7 （after 27．．．f6 White has various wins，but the best one is to keep on

 disf 29 曾g5\＃．This must have been a great shock for the ex－world champion！

5）

$$
\begin{gathered}
\text { Malakhatko - Ovechkin } \\
\text { Voronezh } 2008
\end{gathered}
$$

20 2f6＋
White opens a route for his queen．
20．．．．巴xf6
粦xf8\＃．This motif will be repeated in all lines．

21 登xf6 gxf6
需g7\＃

## 22 wg $4+9 \mathrm{~g} 6$

22．．．
23 薑xg6＋象h8
As a result of the combination，White has re－ gained the sacrificed material，and is left with by far the best pieces on the board．He has vari－ ous ways now to conclude the job；domination is the most effective．


## 6）Dimitrijević－K．Stokke

Rilton Cup，Stockholm 2007／8
White has an overwhelming concentration of forces on the h－file．He now needs first to open it，and then to make good use of it．



White＇s pieces cooperate in perfect harmony．

## 7）Dzagnidze－Sulskis <br> Gibraltar 2008

Black has established control of the open b－ file，and penetrated to his seventh rank．Various tactical ideas arise now，but first he needs to bring up some material support for his attack：

29．．． $0 \times 1$ 3！
With this simple idea，Black introduces two powerful pieces with gain of tempo：

．．． $2 \mathrm{f} 4+$ or ．．．岩 $\mathrm{xg} 3+$ is inevitable now．
 0－1

8）
Garbisu－Kosić
Budapest 2008

## 26 分xe6！

White has concentrated too many troops against the f5－square to contemplate a cowardly retreat by his knight．By sacrificing a small amount of material，he unleashes the power of the remaining pieces．He will also achieve a pleasant opposite－bishops position．


䀂f5\＃．

## 9）

Siebrecht－Van Haastert
Dutch Team Ch 2007／8
All the light squares on the black kingside are weak，and there ought to be a way to exploit this fact．





Black loses additional material．
10）

## P．Nikolić－Swinkels

Dutch Team Ch 2007／8
White has prepared a rook－lift on his fourth rank．Now he exploits the weaknesses in Black＇s kingside pawn－structure：

30 Qe6＋！fxe6 31 曽f4＋1－0
After 31．．．宵e8 32 苞xg4 Black loses a queen or a rook．

## 11）Vitiugov－Diachkov

Russian Team Ch，Dagomys 2008
A king in the centre is always a juicy target． We should be willing to part with some material in order to open files for our rooks against it， and exploit the pins created：

23 首cel is also possible，but less precise due

㯎b6＋1－0


## 12）De Vreugt－Mchedlishvili <br> Hilversum 2008

Black has an enormous strategic advantage due to his glorious bishops，and he finds the easiest way to convert it－tactics：

30．．．曹xg3！ 31 hxg 3 禽d4！0－1

## 13）Ristić－Kojović

Yugoslav Team Ch，Vrnjačka Banja 1999
White will be happy to include his rook in the assault．However，the immediate 20 幽f6＋ gives Black the additional option $20 \ldots$ ．．． Thus：

The powerful tandem of queen and rook is sufficient to mate： $22 \ldots$ ）g6 23 皆h7 d6（23．．．巴e7
崰xf7＋

## Tovio－Echavarria

Colombian Ch 2005
White decided to prepare a discovered at－ tack，and wasted precious time by playing 29業el？，and the game was drawn after 29．．．c3 30亘xg6 眥xb4？（ $30 \ldots \mathrm{hxg6} 31$ 㭗xe7 cxb2 is a lot






However，his major pieces were already well－placed for a decisive assault，and he could have sacrificed his bishop immediately to de－ flect Black＇s queen away from the kingside：

A counter－deflection by 30 ．．．c3 does not work
 queen has access to the f6－square，and it is forced mate；check it for yourself．



15）

## Bologan－Heberla

European Ch，Plovdiv 2008
White＇s rooks have occupied both central files，and the black queen is poorly placed on a7． Both black knights are also wandering around on the queenside．This suggests that the posi－ tion is ripe for an assault on the kingside．

 26 憵xe5 酋fe8

26．．．h6 was somewhat more resilient，when Black will finally include his queen in the de－

 30 茈xg6＋

The only＇imperfection＇in White＇s play is that 28 数h6＋mates in five，one move earlier than the text－move would do．

## 1－0

## 16）Kovalevskaya－T．Vasilevich

European Women＇s Ch，Plovdiv 2008
White uses the power of her passed pawn to establish control over the seventh rank．

## 35 皆b7

35 宸数 is another solution．We gave this ex－ ample to demonstrate the power of the passed
pawn，and the fact that it can be used in various ways，in this case thanks to a pin： $35 \ldots$ xa7 36億 b ．



## 17）

## Motylev－Markos

European Ch，Plovdiv 2008
White needs to break in via the open h－file．
41 窅g6！亘ff7
41．．．hxg6 42 fxg6．


## 18）

## Khuzman－Yanev

European Ch，Plovdiv 2008
Black＇s rooks are forked，and he needs to act promptly if he is not to lose．

The rooks are getting untangled and their power is sufficient to keep the balance．

45 念 $x b 7$
After 45 蔦cl $\underset{\underline{E}}{ } \mathrm{e} 7$ Black will make use of the pin．

## 45．．．㽞b6！

Black＇s sacrifice on g 2 blew open the white king＇s pawn－shield，so White now cannot af－ ford to capture the rook．

46 害g2
 will be mate．

46．．．仓e6 47 㗀e4 总xc7
Black has broken free of the fork，and is re－ warded with half a point for his creativity．
 $1 / 2-1 / 2$

19）

## Jojua－Banikas

European Ch，Plovdiv 2008
White drags the black king towards the cen－ tre，and mates：
幽xd7 26 f4 1－0

20）

> Pantsulaia - Swiercz
> European Ch, Plovdiv 2008

The first move is obvious：White will open the $h$－file for his rooks．

28 憲xg6！！hxg6
 Qe4 is good for White．

$$
29 \text { 品fh1 新g7 }
$$

But what now？
30 胃 1 h 2 ！
The key move：White has enough time to tri－ ple his major pieces on the only open file．

30．．．全xe5
Black＇s only chance is to fish in muddy wa－ ters，but it will not work here．
芫xg6＋


 1－0

21）Minina－Djingarova
European Women＇s Ch，Plovdiv 2008
22．．．害h3＋！
With this clever strike，Black wins material due to the pin on the d－file．
䀂b4 0－1

22）
E．Cosma－Calzetta
European Women＇s Ch，Plovdiv 2008
Black＇s queen is overloaded：
 1－0

23）Zimina－Zakurdzhaeva
European Women＇s Ch，Plovdiv 2008
Black＇s king is desperately weak，and the po－ sition is screaming out for the decisive blow：

19 axb6＋！axb6 20 幽xb6 1－0
24）
Nayer－Maletin
European Ch，Plovdiv 2008
20 © $x$ 7：


Black may then have some hopes based on the opposite－coloured bishops in an endgame．The game continuation is based on the poor coordi－ nation of Black＇s pieces．



White plays for the attack，and already has a

 slip away．


営bxd6！1－0

Roiz－B．Savchenko
European Ch，Plovdiv 2008
15 旬c6！番f8
Probably Black had overlooked that after 15．．．hxg5 16 亿e5 鼻xe5 17 夏xd5 exd5 18 首e6＋ his position is falling apart．


18 包 5 1－0
26）
D．Fridman－N．Mamedov
European Ch，Plovdiv 2008
21 g4！
Some computer engines take quite while to discover this unexpected blow．

21．．．fxg4 22 迫d5！
The point：this opens lines on the kingside， and excludes Black＇s queen from the defence．

22．．．e6
White also mates after $22 . . . \mathrm{g} f 823$ 㟶 xg 4


25．．．h6 26 关gl and 䛓xh6＋is inevitable．
27）

## Akopian－lotov

European Ch，Plovdiv 2008
The e4－bishop protects h 7 ，but an idea based on both interference and pin will make it an in－ effective defender．

30 g 6 ！臬xg6
Now the pin will come into play．The inter－ ference theme is seen in the line $30 \ldots$ ．．．fxg 31㟶xh7\＃．

## 

Black resigned since many roads lead to Rome．

28）Vachier－Lagrave－Vitiugov
European Ch，Plovdiv 2008

 41 xg6＋White wins everything．

## 29）

M．Gurevich－Jojua
European Ch，Plovdiv 2008
33 血e3！
Without the fianchettoed bishop，Black col－ lapses．

33．．．鼻x 3




34 显2 1－0
34．．．当g8 35 䍒xh6＋䨋xh6 36 嵝h3＋．
30）Cmilyte－E．Atalik
European Women＇s Ch，Dresden 2007


31）Bromberger－Kremenietsky Gausdal 2008
By dragging the king out，White will awaken his queenside forces：




22鼻h6＋！tg8



## 32）Efimenko－Andreikin

Russian Team Ch，Dagomys 2008
No centralized king is ever safe！White will break in by using the queen＇s need for＇fresh air＇．


畄f4．



 1－0

33）Lilleoren－Zhu Chen
Gibraltar 2008
A bishop on c5 is a monster，and Black needs an open $h$－file to support its efforts．

22．．． $0 \mathrm{~g} 4+$ ！ 23 hxg 4
当xg3 数b6 is no picnic either．


## 34）

## Naiditsch－Mas

Dresden Olympiad 2008
It is not easy to understand what is happen－ ing at the moment，as there are so many pieces hanging．

## 25 ©xh6＋！

White creates an overloaded piece in his op－ ponent＇s camp while using one of his attacked pieces as a desperado．
 dxe6 雨xd8 29 exf7＋採xf7 30 fxe5 $\pm$

The end of the forced line leaves White a solid pawn ahead with a positional advantage．

32．．． E f 8 is more resilient．

35）

## Leventić－Bistrić

Bosnian Team Ch，Neum 2008
Both central files have been occupied by white rooks，and the black king is in the centre． He has no chance．．．
 21 鼻 $25+1-0$

36）Bluvshtein－Rowson
Dresden Olympiad 2008
20．．．e3！
A pawn－even a centre pawn－for a whole diagonal is a small price！

21 宽xe3 官b722

22．．．新f3＋0－1

37）M．Muzychuk－I．Andrenko
Ukrainian Girls＇Ch，Odessa 2008
White has a way to bring a piece into the at－ tack with gain of tempo：


## 38）Malakhatko－Perez Felipe

La Laguna 2008
With such an exposed king，our task is a pure pleasure：

20 单 $\mathrm{d} 5+$ ！㿟g6

浸 $6+$ 我c5 25 楮xc3．

21 賭d3＋！
Interference．White excludes the black queen from the defence and so gives mate．

1－0


## 39）K．Rohonyan－Motoc

Dresden（Women＇s Olympiad） 2008
Black＇s king is not safe on e7，and it will be even worse if dragged into the middle of the board：
当xc5


 ＋－．

## 

After 22 ．．．${ }^{\omega} \mathrm{w}$ e5 there are mating lines possi－ ble，but it is enough if you saw that Black＇s


23 銆d6＋

 effective too．

1－0

## 40）Pruess－Chua

USA Ch Qualifier，Chicago 2008
The rooks have already occupied the vital seventh rank．It is time for White to make use of this：

Creating a deadly battery．
24．．．h5
 \＃xe5＋－．

25 分h 6

1－0
41）Harikrishna－Svidler
Dresden Olympiad 2008
25 迷хе6！
White breaks in thanks to his light－square domination．

## 25．．．．ひab8

After 25 ．．．fxe6 26 息xe6＋的h7 27 燐f3！the white queen switches to the h－file．The attack proves to be decisive since White has an enor－


 33 賭xd6 + －
 33 혀g．g 3 and the checks are over．



25 ．．．Wec8 is answered in a similar way： 26



## 42）Bukowska－Valickova

Trinec 2001
White first makes use of the vulnerable back rank：

18．．．cxd6 19 気e8＋乌f8 20 余xd6 定c7 21 2e7＋형h8 22 羔xa8＋－

19 घe $8+$ c） 8 （ $D$ ）


And now the power of his centralized knights．

This counterattack had to be foreseen，as White＇s rook and king are both in danger．


## 21 㟈e3！© $2+$

Or：21．．．宸xe3 22 fxe3＋－；21．．．輷xd5 22
 move） 23 憎xe7 cxd6 $24 \mathrm{hxg} 3+-$ ．

22 曹xe2 㘊xd5
 Qe7＋훌h8 26 亿xf7\＃．This mating mechanism works in most of the lines．
 1－0

43）Nakamura－N．Ninov
French Team Ch，Evry 2008
18 Ee8＋！！
With this original idea，White traps the black rook on h8．As a result he wins all the black pawns on the kingside and preserves his attack－ ing possibilities．

18．．．家xe8 19 對xg7自xd5
19．．． mf 820 ge 1＋also does not rescue Black．



Now White played 21 箅e1？！and went on to win，but it was better to proceed with 21 置 $\times d 5$ ！

 25 嘼g3（as given by A．Kuzmin）with three pawns for the piece and a dangerous attack．

44）

## Illas－H．Blanco

Cuba 2004
1．．．g3＋！ 2 皃xg3 崖f4＋！！
If you saw this idea to drag out the white king，I congratulate you！

The king will be dragged into the heart of Black＇s position．As Nunn pointed out in John Nunn＇s Chess Puzzle Book，3．．． quickly．

## 4 白g5

 threat） 6 萌bl 鼻e8！and now 7．．．䍖c6\＃will fol－ low．

## 4．．．鼻f6＋

Even better was $4 \ldots$ ．．．h8（with the idea 5．．．〇g6 followed by ．．．䆩ff\＃）．Then 5 g 4 ！真f6＋6 皃f4 h4 $7 \mathrm{~g} 5 \mathrm{e} 5+8$ 皃g 4 害d7\＃is a possible follow－ up．However，the line in the game is equally strong．

5 名f4



5．．．鼻h4！
Do not let the king back！
6 感e5
$6 \mathrm{e} 5 \mathrm{mg} 6+7$ 多e4 全c6\＃．


9．．．鼻b6\＃（D）

（0－1）
45）
Khenkin－Kariakin
Dresden Olympiad 2008

## 

White has to part with his queen，since Black is also threatening $36 \ldots .{ }^{\circ} \mathrm{Oh} 3 \#$ ．



## Babula－Gongora

Dresden Olympiad 2008
27 b 6 ！
Thanks to the pins，Black has no good reply to this breakthrough．

27．．．あd728 Ёxd5！
The bishop is more important than the rook since it will help the pawn to queen．

## 28．．．exd5 29 自xd5

The powerful bishop duet makes a pleasant aesthetic impression．

29．．．a6 30 余xa8 营xa8 31 b71－0
Barsov－D．Flores
Dresden Olympiad 2008
The position is anything but usual．White has a great material advantage，but almost all the black pieces are full of energy．His only inac－ tive piece had to join the battle now：29．．．${ }^{\text {是 }} \mathbf{c} 5+$ ！ 30 觡h 1 笪el（even better than the line advo－ cated by Golubev： $30 \ldots$ ．．膤xd5＋！？ 31 笪xd5 $\triangle f 3$ ， when White is a whole queen ahead，but his only defence is to give it away for free： 32
 objectively winning） 31 名g2 要g1＋32

 Black has both a material advantage and a deci－ sive attack．

Instead，the game followed a very different course．Probably both players were in severe time－trouble，which would explain the tactical errors that occurred in the actual play：



## 31 㟶xe5？

After 31 gisf
 bishop，but Black＇s pieces are very active．The best practical solution for him is then to part with some of the superfluous material by 35
紫h6 39 曾c8 + －，when Black＇s pieces are com－ pletely tied up．

Further evidence of time－trouble．After the


36 断 a 胃 bl the game would still have been un－ clear．

34 数xd2 1－0
48）Jobava－Rowson
Dresden Olympiad 2008
38 © 4 （ $D$ ）


A cunning double attack．Black needs to part with his a5－pawn，since 39 dd6\＃is a much more unpleasant threat．．．

## 38．．． E d8

After $38 \ldots$ ．．．dxc4 39 嘪xc4＋White wins an ex－ change in addition to the pawn．

49）
Topalov－Zhigalko
Dresden Olympiad 2008
39 前 $x d 5$ ！
White has various ways of converting his huge advantage，but this small combination is both the shortest and the most beautiful way．

39．．．exd5 40 e6 1－0
Black resigned in the face of 40 ．．． E 8 f 41
 gxf6 42 e7．

50）

## Radjabov－Kamsky

Dresden Olympiad 2008
Black has just committed a terrible mistake

$30 \mathrm{~d} 5+$ ！
This double decoy forces Black to part with material．

30．．．홀f7
There＇s nothing better：30．．．量xd5 $31 \varepsilon \mathrm{c} 7+$ ； 30．．．亘xd531 0 c7\＃．

31 dxc6 bxc6 32 包xb4 cxb5 33 苗xb8＋－


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The advice frequently given to chess-players eager to improve their results is straightforward: study tactics! But there is often little useful guidance as to how this is best done. By solving puzzle positions? Or endgame studies? By dissecting the games of great tacticians?
Few books present a structured approach to tactics, so this book fills a valuable niche in the ambitious player's library. The authors present each major tactical theme in turn, explaining how it works and providing inspiring examples. They then explain how you can spot the idea in your own games and use it to your advantage. You immediately get a chance to put your knowledge to the test, as there are challenging exercises throughout the whole book, with detailed solutions.

The second part of the book offers more advanced material, and takes us inside the professional's tactics laboratory. Here we see how tactical themes are combined, and employed to achieve strategic goals. We are also shown how grandmasters spot the targets for their breathtaking combinations, which we thus come to see not as sheer witchcraft, but as the product of disciplined thought and training.
Bulgarian grandmaster Dejan Bojkov is an extremely active player and writer on chess, whose reports appear on Chessbase.com and in Chess Today, among many others.
Vladimir Georgiev is also a grandmaster from Bulgaria, who now plays for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia - he has won the national championship of both countries. He is the trainer of former Women's World Champion Antoaneta Stefanova.


